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MEMOIRS OF THE DUKE DE SAINT-SIMON

Louis XV. King of France.

MEMOIRS OF THE DUKE DE SAINT-SIMON

AN ABRIDGED TRANSLATION WITH NOTES

BY

FRANCIS ARKWRIGHT

With Four Illustrations in Photogravure

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CONTENTS

VOL. VI

CHAPTER I

1717

The Finance Committee—I am congratulated on my impartiality—I propose to disband the Gendarmerie Light-Horse and Musketeers —My reasons—Recommendation of the Finance Committee—The Parliament again asserts its pretensions to authority over the Council of Regency—Prince Eugène defeats the Turks—I present my two sons to the King and Regent—The Duke de Noailles and Law—I receive an unwelcome commission from the Duchess of Orleans— The King's childish games cause a serious quarrel—Marshal de Villeroy—Death of the Countess of Soissons—M. d'Elbœuf and Lalleu —The Maréchale de Boufflers appeals to me—I manœuvre accordingly with success—Gratitude of the Lalleu peasants pp. 1–16

CHAPTER II

1717

Unrest in Brittany—Request for a secret interview—Madame d'Alègre— I acquaint the Regent with her mysterious warnings—Ill-health of the King of Spain—Alberoni's warlike preparations—Law and his supporters—The Duke de Noailles and La Trappe—The Mississippi Company—The Count de Rieux—The Poll-tax—The tax-farmers and the Salt-tax—I propose its abolition, but my efforts are foiled —Plots of the First-President and d'Effiat—The old calumnies against the Regent are revived—The Parliament attacks Law—Its protests laid before the King—Argenson—His appointment as Keeper of the Seals and President of the Council of Finance—The Chancellor made scapegoat for the Duke de Noailles . . . . pp. 17–35

CHAPTER III

1718

The Duke and Duchess of Lorraine visit Paris—His claims and his treaty with the Regent—St. Contest—My objections—The Regent's hoax —His real opinion of me—The Regent's mistresses—La Trappe and Sept-Fonts—Death of the Abbé d'Estrées—Cardinal de Trémouille appointed to Cambrai in his place—Broglio's suggestions regarding the army adopted by the Regent—Death of the King's physician

and appointment of his successor—Chirac and the Botanical Gardens —Fire on the Seine—Death of the Queen of England at St. Germain . . . . . pp. 36–52

CHAPTER IV

1718

A salutary lesson to Rome—Death of the Grand Equerry—The Chapter of Denain—I procure redress of their wrongs—Foreign affairs—The Quadruple Alliance—Spain invades Sicily—Destruction of the Spanish fleet by Admiral Byng—Contraband salt-selling—Parliament and the currency—Their proclamation and its failure—Madame du Maine's intrigues . . . . . pp. 53–68

CHAPTER V

1718

Rumours of a proposed *lit-de-justice*—Memoirs of Cardinal de Retz. Joly, and Madame de Motteville—Hopes of a new Fronde—The Parliament plot to kill Law—I propose that the *lit-de-justice* be held at the Tuileries—The Duke of Orleans discusses his plans with me and preparations for the *lit-de-justice* are made—I interview Fontanieu—I call on the Duke de Bourbon—Our interview—We discuss M. du Maine—The King's education—The Comte de Charolais—The Regent's possible successor—We part on excellent terms pp. 69–91

CHAPTER VI

1718

I report my conversation with the Duke de Bourbon to the Regent—I point out once more to the Regent his deplorable weakness and warn him against the Duke—I miss the Duke in the Tuileries gardens—The Parliamentary Edicts annulled—M. de la Force and the Council of Regency—The matter of the King's education—A discovery—I meet the Duke de Bourbon—Our interview—My information about his brother—The Regent's trivial objections to the arrangements for the *lit-de-justice*—Conversation between the Count de Toulouse and the Regent—Arrangements with Fagon and the Abbé Dubois—Further talk with the Duke de Bourbon—I try to gain some advantage for the peers—and the reduction of the bastards—The Duke de Bourbon promises to ask for both from the Regent—I propose the Count de Toulouse be exempted—The Duke agrees . pp. 92–118

CHAPTER VII

1718

I interview Millain—The Regent agrees that the peers shall be informed of the proposed edict relating to the bastards—I again entreat his firmness—I receive warning of a plot by M. du Maine from the Duke d'Humières and warn the Regent—Postponement of arrest of members of Parliament—Further plans for the morrow—We agree no hint shall be given to the bastards at the Council of the edict—The meet-

ing of the *lit-de-justice* to be held with open doors—I ask permission to confide in the Duke de Chaulnes—The Duke of Orleans complains of indisposition—Contade and the Swiss Guards . pp. 119–134

CHAPTER VIII

1718

The fateful day dawns—I warn the Count de Toulouse—I ask to see the deeds—The Council assembles—The Duke of Orleans explains the situation to the Count de Toulouse, who, with M. du Maine, leaves the Council Chamber—Explanation by the Regent to the Council—Their demeanour and amazement—The Regent calls on the Keeper of the Seals to make his statement—Speeches of the Council and their dismay—I depute La Vrillière to carry messages to the door—The Regent makes known his intentions regarding the bastards—I lay our petition on the table, thus outwitting Marshals de Villeroy and Villars—The Resolution is carried—The Regent announces the exemption of the Count de Toulouse—I thank the Regent on behalf of the peers—M. le Duc asks for the control of the King's education in place of M. du Maine—A stupefied silence follows his speech—We await the arrival of the Parliament—I request Tallard to reassure Marshal de Villeroy . . . . . pp. 135–157

CHAPTER IX

1718

Arrival of the Parliament—The King proceeds to the Great Antechamber for the holding of the *lit-de-justice*—Significant glances in my direction warn me to be on my guard—Argenson faces the Parliament in his new capacity as Keeper of the Seals—The First-President speaks in much confusion—The King's answer falls like a thunderbolt on the Parliament—The downfall of M. du Maine announced—My emotions—I watch the audience—The Duke de Bourbon appointed to have charge of the King's education—The little King's indifference to the loss of M. du Maine—I pay out the First-President pp. 158–170

CHAPTER X

1718

I receive an unpleasant commission and start on it reluctantly—Reception of my news by the Duchess of Orleans—I return to Paris—Behaviour of the Duchess of Orleans—The Count de Toulouse—His Equerry's plain speaking—He attends the Council of Regency—My congratulations—Arrest of three members of Parliament—Parliament's ineffectual protest thereat—Effect of the Regent's action on Foreign Powers, and on France itself—The affair of the cap pp. 171–185

CHAPTER XI

1718

Madame d'Alègre's warnings—I procure two favours—The Chevalier de Rancé—I prevail on the Regent not to accept the Duke de Mortemart's resignation and secure the reversion of his office to his son—The

Duke de Bourbon entertains the Duchess of Berry at Chantilly—The Chevalier de St. George—Godet, Archbishop of Rouen, and his parish priests—I counsel delay and inquiry at the Council—Salt-smugglers—Strained relations with Spain—The Duke of Berwick and Hasfeld—Cellamare's plot—An important despatch and its bearers—Their arrest at Poitiers—Cellamare's papers examined by the Abbé Dubois and Le blanc—His arrest—Complicity of M. and Madame du Maine—Their arrest decided upon—St. Aignan and his wife—Their escape from Spain—A successful ruse . . . pp. 186–204

CHAPTER XII

1719

The Regent consults me as to war with Spain—My advice disregarded—War declared—The Prince of Conti—Forged pamphlets—"Philippics"—The King of Sardinia and the Jesuits—Lot of the Jesuits at the hands of their Society—Father Tellier's death—Treachery of the Duke de Richelieu and Saillant—The Duchess of Berry—Cardinal de Noailles forbids her the Sacraments—Last years and death of Madame de Maintenon—Madame de Orleans—The war opens with the capture of the Passages—A post near Bidassoa . pp. 205–219

CHAPTER XIII

1719

Law and the Mississippi Company—I refuse the shares offered me, to the Regent's annoyance—He repays me the 500,000 livres spent by my father in defending Blaye—The Duchess of Berry's illness—Her character—The story of her rings—Her death—The Regent's grief for his daughter—Illness of Madame de St. Simon—Madame du Maine's confessions as to the plot with Spain—The Grand Prior sells his office and applies for a dispensation to enable him to marry—His death—Negotiations for a marriage between the Prince of Piedmont and Mademoiselle de Valois—Madame intervenes—Madame de Coigny—The Council of Regency discredited—My advice to the Regent—Speculation—The Abbé Dubois—Madame Tencin and her brother—Law's conversion to Roman Catholicism . pp. 220–237

CHAPTER XIV

1719

Fleury—Caignières' portraits—Downfall of Cardinal Alberoni—He carries off the will of Charles II—The title-deed to the Spanish dominions—The little King's dislike for Dubois—The Regent and Marshal de Villeroy—The Regent wishes to appoint me in the Marshal's place—I refuse and give my reasons for so doing—The Abbé d'Entragues—Squabbles between Law and Argenson over the finances—Law appointed Controller-General of Finance—Law and the Prince of Conti—The King's ballet—I urge the formation of a Council, on the Regent—Noirmonstier—Cardinal de la Trémouille and the Abbé d'Auvergne's tricks—Peace with Spain concluded—Marriage of Mademoiselle de Valois with the Prince of Modena . pp. 238–255

CHAPTER XV

1720

Law's bank and his schemes—Confiscation of money—The King begins to attend meetings of the Council of Regency—Dubois appoints himself Archbishop of Cambrai—The King of Spain and the Pope—The Count d'Horn—He murders a broker, is tried and sentenced to be broken on the wheel—His family plead for commutation of the sentence, but unavailingly—Plot in Brittany—Subordinate conspirators executed—The Mississippi scheme again—"Shortneck"—The *Conseil d'État* and its abortive Edict—The Regent determines to deprive Argenson of the Seals, and offers them to me—I refuse all his entreaties—The bank and its credit—Steps to maintain the same—Trudaine's indiscretion and its consequences—His gratitude to me . . . . . pp. 256–276

CHAPTER XVI

1720

Edict to bolster up Law's system—The Parliament refuses to register the same—A riot and a Royal Proclamation—The Regent complains of the Chancellor's inefficiency—The Parliament is banished to Pontoise—"Safeguards"—Marseilles and the plague—Letters patent for the acceptance of the Constitution *Unigenitus*—These, refused by Parliament, are sanctioned by the Grand Council—Dangeau—His advancement—His Memoirs—The Duke de Lorge marries Mademoiselle de Mesmes—My anger—I finally consent to be reconciled for Madame de Saint-Simon's sake—Parliament finally consents to register the "Constitution" and returns to Paris—Flight of Law pp. 277–291

CHAPTER XVII

1721

La Houssaye appointed Controller-General of Finance—Marshal de Villeroy is impertinent to the Regent—I again refuse the post of Governor to the King—My reasons—The Regent consults me on the treaty with England and Spain—I point out the disadvantages to France and censure Dubois—Angry scene between the Regent and Dubois—Dubois attempts to make mischief between me and the Regent—Torcy exposes his intrigues—Visit of the Sultan's Ambassador—The Duke of Chartres appointed Colonel-General of Infantry—Torcy induces me to join him in persuading Marshal de Villeroy to oppose Dubois—The Marshal refuses and reports his refusal to the Regent pp. 292–307

CHAPTER XVIII

1721

Death of Pope Clement XI—Dubois receives his Cardinal's Hat—Death of Chamillart and Desmarets—The Regent's reconciliation with Spain—Proposed marriage for the King and Mademoiselle de Chartres—The Infanta to be brought up in France—I propose the convent of Val de

Grâce—And ask to be made Ambassador to Spain to make formal request for the Infanta's hand and sign the marriage contract—I ask for the Regent's influence to obtain a Grandeeship for my younger son, the Marquis de Ruffec—The Regent grants both requests—Dubois is annoyed—Bellisle approaches me with overtures from Dubois—The King's illness and recovery—Death of the Grand-duchess of Tuscany—The Duke de Bourbon—Question of announcing the marriage arranged for the King with the Infanta—Difficulty of obtaining the little King's consent—He finally gives it in Council—Annoyance of the Cabal—Announcement of the proposed marriage between the Duke of the Asturias and the Regent's daughter—My reflections on the projected marriages . . . pp. 308–325

CHAPTER XIX

1721

My bickerings with Cardinal Dubois—Arguments concerning my suite and equipages—Dubois' desire to ruin me—I protest against a military escort—Sartine—My mission announced—The Duke de Liria and the Duke de Veragua—Laullez gives me much useful information, and we become friends—My instructions and a question of precedence—Dubois desires to make my mission a failure—I receive the documents for my mission—Dubois' impudent proposal—Torcy resigns the Post-office—I start on my mission—My interview with the Duke d'Ossuna—My journey—My audience with the Queen-Dowager of Spain—I visit Loyola—Their Majesties of Spain become impatient—I arrive in Madrid—My audience with the King and Queen of Spain pp. 326–343

CHAPTER XX

1721

My magnificent entertainment—Cellamare's behaviour—I call on Grimaldo and present my letters—Still no letter for the Infanta—I have an interview with Maulevrier and present him with his credentials as Ambassador—Impressions of the King and Queen and Grimaldo—Private audience with their Majesties—My public audience—Message from the King of Spain—My addresses—The King's reply—Magny—My audience with the Queen of Spain—Maulevrier's behaviour—The duplicate marriage contracts—I carry out Cardinal Dubois' orders by some strategy—The French copy of the marriage contract is not forthcoming—My protest—Dubois' letter to Maulevrier—I feign unconcern . . . . . pp. 344–359

CHAPTER XXI

1721

I transgress the etiquette of the Spanish Court—The marvellous illuminations—My astonishment and admiration thereat give great satisfac-

tion—The ball in the Hall of the Grandees—The Princess de Robecque —My audience with the King and Queen—The Infanta's religious education—The Queen's invitation—I consult Grimaldo—I announce Mademoiselle de Montpensier's departure from France—The King and Queen receive me in audience while in bed—Departure of the King and Queen for Lerma—I send off my despatches by a young officer with certain requests anent them to Dubois—Prince de Rohan—My visits—Prince d'Aubenton—His request and my reply—My journey to Lerma—I stay at the Escurial *en route*—I am seized with small-pox —The King of Spain's physician attends me . . pp. 360–376

CHAPTER XXII

1722

My character sketch of the King and Queen of Spain—The King's scruples about his right to the Spanish throne—Alberoni's influence with the Queen and its results—The daily life in the Spanish Court—The King and Queen never apart—The Queen's plans for her sons—Her unpopularity in Spain—A shooting party—The game of Mall—My son's honours—Dubois' letters—Grimaldo's advice concerning them—The exchange of Princesses on the Isle of Pheasants—Rohan's extravagant claims—The order of the Golden Fleece—Cardinal Borgia's vanity—The King and Queen, with the Prince of the Asturias, pay a surprise visit to Mademoiselle de Montpensier . . . . pp. 377–392

CHAPTER XXIII

1722

The marriage of the Prince of the Asturias and Mlle de Montpensier—The rehearsal of the marriage ceremony—My amusement—The King of Spain makes me and my son a Grandee of Spain and confers on my eldest son the Order of the Golden Fleece—The marriage—I interview the Marquis de Villena—The ball—The public *coucher* of the newly married pair—Maulevrier's absence and his displeasure—I am admitted to the Princess's bedside during her illness—The King and Queen's anxiety and inquiries—Investiture of my second son —Chavigny—Grimaldo is angry at his appointment as Envoy—The King and Queen snub Chavigny—I fail to reinstate the Duke of Berwick in the good graces of the King and Queen, or to procure a Grandeeship for the Duke of St. Aignan . . pp. 393–410

CHAPTER XXIV

1722

The little Princess of the Asturias is ill-tempered—I counsel the King and Queen not to spoil her—She refuses to attend the ball—Public festivities in honour of the double marriage—The Spanish Court at Buen-Retiro—I visit Toledo—Miracles and the Hall of the Councils—My disgust—Pimental and my dilemma—Aranjuez—Reception of my eldest son as a Knight of the Golden Fleece—My dinner-party to celebrate the event . . . . pp. 411–424

CHAPTER XXV

1722

Letter from Dubois—He reports supposed cabals at the French Court—I see through his intrigues and consult Grimaldo as to the possibility of an interview with the King of Spain—I arrive at Balsäim—My audience—Segovia—La Granja—Bannière—My letters to Dubois at Belleisle—An absurd report—My farewells—My audience with the Princess of the Asturias—Maulevrier is made a Knight of the Golden Fleece and receives a severe snub . . . . . pp. 425–440

CHAPTER XXVI

1722

I leave Spain—My journey home—Letters from the Cardinal Bellisle—I visit the Duke of Berwick at Marmande—I arrive at Chartres—Proposed banishment of the Duke de Noailles—My interview with Bellisle—I arrive in Paris and interview the Regent and Cardinal Dubois—The King's confessor—I resign my dukedom in favour of my eldest son—He takes the title of Duke de Ruffec—I call on Cardinal de Noailles and pay many visits—My daughter marries the Prince de Chimay—The Abbé de Saint-Simon's sister marries the Count de Laval—The King goes to Versailles—The Duke de Noailles is banished—Dubois schemes to get rid of the Marshal de Villeroy—The Marshal loses his temper and quarrels openly with Dubois—The Regent consults me as to his dismissal—My advice—The Marshal falls into our trap—His subsequent arrest . . . . pp. 441–461

CHAPTER XXVII

1722

The King is informed of Marshal de Villeroy's arrest and is much distressed—While at Meudon I receive a despatch from Dubois imploring me to return to Versailles immediately—I am requested to bring some one to ride at once to La Trappe—The Bishop of Fréjus' disappearance—He is speedily traced and the King consoled—The Duke of Charost appointed governor to the King—Dubois schemes to be made Prime Minister—I discuss the matter with the Regent—His excuse for acceding to Dubois' wishes—My entreaties and plain speaking are in vain—Dubois is appointed Prime Minister and professes to believe he owes his appointment to my good offices—General disapproval of the appointment—Betrothal of the Infant Don Carlos and the fifth daughter of the Duke of Orleans . . . pp. 462–476

CHAPTER XXVIII

1722

Approach of the King's Coronation—The dignity of the Peers—I ask for a written promise that their precedence be respected at the Coronation—This being refused, I and many others fail to attend the Coronation—The Coronation takes place shorn of its proper ceremonial—Death of Madame, and of Madame la Princesse—I see less and less of the Duke of Orleans, who is completely controlled by Dubois—The

King's majority and the honours list—Three new Dukes—Marriage of the Comte de Toulouse—The privilege of the *entrées*—Dubois persuades the Regent to recall the patents—The familiar *entrées* granted to the Bastards—The Peers protest—Dubois and Father d'Aubenton—Le Blanc is forced to retire, and Breteuil is appointed Secretary for War—A strange story—Death of D'Aubenton—Death of Dubois—His career—Anecdotes about him—The King appoints the Duke of Orleans Prime Minister in his stead . pp. 477–494

CHAPTER XXIX

1723

Death of Mesmes—I visit the Duke of Orleans again—Ecclesiastical appointments for notorious profligates—The Abbess of Chelle protests—I visit the Duke of Orleans early one morning and am horrified at his condition—His doctor's warnings—I confer with the Bishop of Fréjus and advise him to secure the King's consent to his appointment as Prime Minister in the event of the Duke of Orleans' sudden death—Fréjus refuses on the Duke de Bourbon's account—Death of the Duke de Lausun—The story of his life . . . . pp. 495–515

CHAPTER XXX

1723

Sudden death of the Duke of Orleans from apoplexy—His last moments—M. le Duc appointed Prime Minister—I attend the King's *lever*—I pay a visit of condolence to the Duchess of Orleans and to the Duke of Chartres—I have an interview with M. le Duc—Sad reflections—The King's grief—The Duke of Orleans' funeral—The Count de Toulouse announces his secret marriage . . . . pp. 516–525

CONCLUSION

My love of truth—Considerations of impartiality—The trustworthiness of these Memoirs—I prophesy that if and when these Memoirs see the light they will by many be denounced—For whom they were written—My conversations recorded with scrupulous fidelity—My faulty literary style, for which I pray the reader's indulgence pp. 526–529

INDEX . . . . . pp. 531–561

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. VI

Louis XV, King of France . . .	*Frontispiece*
	FACING PAGE
Armand Gaston, Cardinal de Rohan	144
Peter the Great of Russia	288
View of the Bassin de St. Cloud	416

MEMOIRS OF THE DUKE DE SAINT-SIMON

VOLUME VI

CHAPTER I

1717

The Finance Committee—I am congratulated on my impartiality—I propose to disband the Gendarmerie Light-Horse and Musketeers—My reasons—Recommendation of the Finance Committee—The Parliament again asserts its pretensions to authority over the Council of Regency—Prince Eugène defeats the Turks—I present my two sons to the King and Regent—The Duke de Noailles and Law—I receive an unwelcome commission from the Duchess of Orleans—The King's childish games cause a serious quarrel—Marshal de Villeroy—Death of the Countess of Soissons—M. d'Elbœuf and Lalleu—The Maréchale de Boufflers appeals to me—I manœuvre accordingly with success—Gratitude of the Lalleu peasants.

In the meantime the committee appointed to inquire into the finances was meeting several times a week. Although I had been appointed to it very much against my will, I listened attentively to the reports laid before us by the Duke de Noailles and the discussions which ensued; for I have always been of opinion that no personal resentments should be allowed to interfere with a man's public duties. As I had openly avowed my ignorance of financial matters I was not ashamed to ask for an explanation when there was anything which I did not understand. It often happened that I thought the Duke de Noailles in the right, and then I always took his part, sometimes rather warmly. He mentioned this to the Regent; as did the Chancellor, who complimented me on my impartiality. The Duke of Orleans replied that it did not surprise him in the least; and he told me afterwards how much pleased he was to hear of my conduct. I told the Chancellor that the person of the Duke de Noailles and his opinions were two entirely distinct things. Very likely I should oppose his recommendations more roughly than another man's if I thought them bad, but when they

seemed to be judicious I should certainly support them, without in any way changing my feelings towards himself personally.

One day, as there was a great deal of business before the committee, we agreed to have two sittings on the morrow, morning and afternoon; and, as our meetings were held at the Chancellor's house, he asked all the members to dine with him, to save them the trouble of going away and coming back again; he also gave me a special invitation. When the morning sitting was over he came up to me and said, in a sort of appealing manner, that it was just dinner-time. I replied by asking him to tell me the exact time at which the afternoon sitting was to begin, so that I might be back punctually. He seemed surprised, and begged me to stay to dinner; but I told him plainly that I really could not dine in company with the Duke de Noailles; any other day, I said, I should be most happy to dine with him and make up for what I was losing. Marshal de Villeroy, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, and other members of the committee came up, however, and added their entreaties to his. At last I gave way on condition that the Duke de Noailles' place should be as far removed from mine as possible.

The dinner was very good and every one seemed pleased that I had stayed; the Duke de Noailles, however, though usually so unembarrassed in his manners, seemed ill at ease; he tried to chatter away, but any one could see that it was forced. Towards the middle of dinner he felt unwell, or pretended to do so, and left the table; the Chancellor's wife went to see what was the matter, and returned with the report that he had the "vapours"; he finished his dinner in another room, but returned when coffee was served. All the company, especially the Chancellor and his wife, thanked me warmly for coming; I did not conceal that it was a great sacrifice on my part, and that the Duke de Noailles' absence during the latter part of dinner had been a great relief to me. This was the only occasion on which there were two sittings in one day; the afternoon meetings were held more frequently, and were more prolonged. I fancy the Chancellor did not wish to expose the Duke de Noailles and myself to the unpleasantness of meeting at dinner a second time.

Before our report was finally drawn up I went to the Chancellor and told him that an idea had occurred to me

which I had not ventured to suggest to the committee, but about which I should like to have his opinion; and, if he approved of it, we could submit it to the Duke of Orleans. It was that the Gendarmerie, the Light-Horse of the Guard, and the two companies of Musketeers, should be disbanded, and two brigades added instead to each of the four corps of the Guards. My reasons were as follows. There was not a squadron in any of these corps which did not cost four times as much as a squadron of ordinary cavalry; and, however brave they might be, they could not be expected to overcome four times their own numbers. Then, with regard to the Gendarmerie in particular, both officers and men raised such claims of superiority over other troops that perpetual squabbles arose wherever they went; the consequence was that no general would have them with his army if he could help it, and so they saw very little service. Another objection, which applied equally to the Light-Horse and the Musketeers, was that they had considerably more officers than ordinary regiments; and the number of equipages which they took with them not only imposed a severe strain on the commissariat but greatly hampered the army in its marches. Moreover, by a regulation of the late King, the officers of these favoured corps were allowed to attain the rank of Colonel and even of General while still serving with their regiments as Cornets, Lieutenants, or Captains; this caused endless confusion, and had the bad consequence of producing a number of Brigadiers and Generals who had no experience whatever except in the lower grades, and yet might be called upon to assume an important command.

The disbandment of the Musketeers would be a good thing in many ways. It had been intended that this corps should be a sort of military school through which every young gentleman seeking a commission should pass without exception, but in this school nothing was taught but mere drill and pedantic trifles. Young men were kept for at least a year in Paris, sometimes more, wasting their money and acquiring loose habits; while they had no opportunity of learning anything of military science or the art of commanding men. When they joined a regiment they were more useless than if they had just emerged from their provinces, for, besides having everything to learn, they had a great deal to unlearn. Even when serving in the detachments sent on active service they had little opportunity of

learning anything really useful, for they served as private soldiers. Now, this is not the right way to use the services of young men of noble birth. It is right that they should go on active service and encounter the risks of war—that is the duty of their class; but it is a barbarous abuse to squander their lives by sending them in a body, as private soldiers, to the assault of a fortified place. It is true that without these corps reviews and camps in time of peace would lose a good deal of their splendour; but the King who was so fond of these displays was dead, and it would be a good thing in many ways if they fell into desuetude.

The Chancellor highly approved of my suggestion; but when we came to talk over the means of carrying it into effect we soon made up our minds that we should never induce the Regent to adopt it; the outcries and intrigues of interested persons would be too much for his good nature. This deplorable weakness of his was a perpetual source of lamentation to those who had the good of the country at heart, to say nothing of his own reputation. We came to the conclusion that if we did propose this useful measure to the Regent it would never be carried out; we should only incur the resentment of the numerous persons interested in keeping things as they were. This consideration closed our mouths, and we kept our plan to ourselves.

The long and tiresome labours of the committee came to an end at last, and the report was agreed to unanimously. It recommended that the Hôtel de Ville stock should not be interfered with; that the 10 per cent. property-tax should be abolished, partly in order to carry out the promise given when it was imposed, that it should last only till peace was declared, partly because, as a matter of fact, it was almost impossible to collect it; that the annual sum of 1,200,000 livres set aside for public buildings should be reduced by one half; and the payments of 10,000 and 36,000 livres a month for the King's pocket-money and wardrobe respectively should be cut down, the first by one-half, the latter by one-third; for at the King's present age the money was wasted and plundered. Many pensions were marked for reduction, and other economies recommended; the committee also advised the reduction of interest on the public debt to 5 per cent. An extraordinary meeting of the Council of Regency, to which the chiefs of the other councils were summoned, was held on the 19th August; and it was

resolved that an edict, embodying the recommendations of the committee, should be drawn up and sent to the Parliament for registration.

The Parliament of Paris always imagined that one of its functions was to act as guardian to Kings during their minority, and afterwards too, if it could be managed; and this opportunity for asserting its pretensions was too good to be lost. It decided that before it consented to register the edict a detailed account of the public revenue and expenditure must be laid before it; and the First-President, accompanied by fourteen members selected from the various Courts of Justice composing the Parliament, went to announce this decision to the Regent. The reply was that he would not suffer any encroachment on the King's authority so long as he was responsible for it. The Parliament then assembled and registered the part of the edict repealing the 10 per cent. property-tax and some other obnoxious imposts; but, with regard to the remainder, the Duke of Orleans, yielding to the terror of the Duke de Noailles, was weak enough to allow him to meet the fourteen deputies, and argue the question with them in his presence; he also sent for Law to explain how the edict would benefit the Mississippi Company. He said not a word of all this to the Council of Regency; still less, if possible, to myself in private; so, in accordance with my usual practice where the Parliament was concerned, I never mentioned the subject to him.

The Parliament, having heard the report of the fourteen deputies, still refused to register the remainder of the edict; and asked the Regent to appoint a day for it to lay a remonstrance before the King. Accordingly on the 9th of September a numerous deputation was presented by the Regent to the King, who told him that his Chancellor would signify his will to them. Next day the whole edict was registered by the Parliament, with notes explaining the King's intentions regarding some of the clauses; and immediately afterwards both Parliament and Councils were allowed to take a vacation of three weeks. So this body contrived to make a solemn function of the registration, and was puffed up with pride at having asserted its claims.

The weakness shown by the Regent and his Minister did them no good, as they soon discovered; the Regent's authority declined, and the men of the gown soon showed the

Duke de Noailles that they only despised him for the servile court he paid to them. If the Duke of Orleans had stood firm, and treated the absurd and dangerous pretensions of the Parliament with contempt, he would have been in a fine position; he had public opinion at his back, for the abolition of the property-tax and other imposts was popular, and the Parliament would never have dared to refuse registration. But he did not know how to profit by his advantages; on the contrary, he gave an opening to all those who for diverse reasons were trying to upset his authority and make him dependent on their good-will and pleasure, which was by no means to leave the administration in his hands. Before long they managed to give him a good deal of trouble.

News arrived that Prince Eugène had completely routed the Turks. He had been besieging Belgrade, but a very powerful Turkish army under the Grand Vizier had entrenched itself in such a position that he was practically besieged himself. In this extremity he resolved to attack the Turks, which he did on the 16th of August under cover of a thick fog. The Turks were taken by surprise, and after less than four hours' fighting were completely defeated, with the loss of all their artillery and an immense number of men. Belgrade capitulated immediately. Prince Eugène's losses were also heavy, including a number of distinguished officers. Estrades had his leg carried off and died shortly afterwards; and Villette, who had fought the duel at Paris with Jonsac, was also killed. The Count de Charolais [1] and the Prince de Dombes [2] distinguished themselves in the battle.

During the previous winter I had been urged to present my sons to the King and the Regent; and certainly at their age the ceremony could not be delayed with propriety. Nevertheless, I postponed it till after the anniversary of the death of Louis XIV, in order that I might take them to the service at St. Denis, and so impress upon their minds how much we owed to that monarch. Having fulfilled this duty, after the example of my father, I presented them; and, finding that the commands of two cavalry regiments were for sale, I obtained the Regent's permission to purchase them on their behalf.

The Duke de Noailles, jealous of the confidence which the

[1] Brother of M. le Duc.

[2] Son of M. du Maine.

Regent placed in Law, did all in his power to damage the credit of his bank, which at that time was the principal financial resource of the Government. Law bore it as well as he could, but sometimes complained modestly; Noailles, however, was bent on overthrowing him in order to obtain sole control of the finances, and continued his machinations. The Regent insisted on a reconciliation between the two men. Law came forward in good faith; the Duke de Noailles could not draw back, and acted his part admirably.

About this time the Duchess of Orleans entrusted me with a commission which was not at all to my liking. Pleinœuf, whose daughter, Madame de Prie, has since made so much noise in the world, had amassed an enormous fortune as a tax-farmer, and later on in the commissariat; but the inquiries of the judicial commission had frightened him into exile, and he had taken refuge at Turin. I had always avoided having anything to do with people of that sort, and I had a special reason for disliking this man; he had been one of the chief clerks in the War Office under Voysin, and the office of town-major of Blaye having become vacant during the last days of the late King, he had promptly secured the appointment for one of his own relations. Now the late King had always allowed me, and my father before me, the peculiar privilege of nominating persons to be appointed to the staff of Blaye; and this was the first time a vacancy had been filled without consulting me; but Voysin was at that time in the highest favour, I knew remonstrance was useless, all I could do was to wait for better days. As a matter of fact, the first thing I did after the King's death was to turn out this town-major and appoint another.

Pleinœuf was a clever, intriguing man; he managed to obtain access to the Ministers, and took it into his head to promote a marriage between the Prince of Piedmont and one of the Duke of Orleans' daughters. His wife, a very clever woman, manœuvred so well that she was admitted to see the Duchess of Orleans several times in private, and persuaded her that the Court of Turin would very probably consent to the marriage. The Duchess saw that, if that were so, the negotiations could not with common decency be left in the hands of Pleinœuf and his wife, so she suggested that they should be entrusted to me. Madame de Pleinœuf did not know me personally, but she told the

Duchess of Orleans that I did not like her husband on account of the affair of Blaye. But that had no effect on the Duchess; she begged me, for her sake, to overcome my resentment against a man so completely beneath my notice; to receive Madame de Pleinœuf, and to enter into communication with Pleinœuf himself about the proposed marriage.

This was a particularly unfavourable moment to choose for such a scheme, for the Regent and the King of Sicily were on bad terms with each other. The Queen of Spain's ambition was to carve out a kingdom in Italy for her son, Don Carlos. In pursuance of this design Alberoni had devoted much care to strengthening the Spanish Navy, and had despatched a fleet to the coasts of Italy, menacing the Emperor's dominions—forces had even been landed in Sardinia—and had summoned Cagliari. The King of Sicily secretly favoured these designs, for he hoped to receive the kingdom of Sardinia in exchange for that of Sicily, and also to obtain possession of portions of the Milanese adjoining his territories in Piedmont. The Regent, on the other hand, sharing the fears of England and Holland lest this aggression on the part of Spain should lead to a general war, had joined with those Powers in guaranteeing the integrity of the Emperor's dominions in Italy. Relations were consequently strained between him and the Court of Turin, and the proposal was not likely to be received very favourably. I could not mention this objection to the Duchess of Orleans, but I did to the Regent when he spoke to me on the subject, and he agreed with me; "But, after all," he said, "we may as well try the experiment. Very unlikely things come off sometimes, and if nothing comes of this we shall only have wasted a few letters." So I could not get out of it; and Madame de Pleinœuf came to see me, all bejewelled, very polite and flattering, and full of her scheme. She made all sorts of apologies on behalf of her husband, who immediately began exchanging letters with me. I never could see that he had any solid grounds for his hopes; his language was merely that of a man who wants to ingratiate himself and make himself important.

This went on for some months; but when the Abbé Dubois returned from England, where he had been on a mission, I begged the Regent to entrust the negotiations to him, apologising to the Duchess of Orleans on the ground

that the Abbé was very jealous, and would certainly prevent the affair from coming to anything in my hands, whereas it might succeed in his. I spoke to Dubois about it, and he agreed with me that, considering the relations between the two Princes, the idea of such a marriage was absurd. As a matter of fact, nothing ever came of it.

One of the King's childish games caused a serious quarrel. A tent had been pitched for him on the terrace of the Tuileries, in front of his windows. He wished to have some medals struck for him to give to such of his playmates as he wished to distinguish ; these medals were to be always worn, and carried with them the right of entrance into the tent ; he called it the Order of the Pavilion. Marshal de Villeroy gave the order for the medals to Lefèvre, the King's silversmith, and when they were ready presented them to the King. Lefèvre was under the orders of the First Gentlemen of the Chamber, and the Duke de Mortemart, who was on duty for the year in that capacity, claimed that it was his privilege to order and present the medals. It was not worth while to make a fuss about such a trifle, and, as none of the other Gentlemen of the Chamber supported the Duke de Mortemart, he got the worst of it. The Duke of Orleans, with his usual love of compromise, said that Lefèvre had not made the medals in his capacity of silversmith to the Household, but because he had received the King's command through Marshal de Villeroy ; and he refused to hear anything more about the matter. The Duke de Mortemart was furious, and went about everywhere abusing Marshal de Villeroy. He continued to raise quarrel after quarrel, and, as the Regent did not decide them all as he wished, he grew sulky and talked of sending in his resignation. The Duke of Orleans spoke to me about him very angrily, and no wonder, for he committed some fresh folly every day ; however, for the sake of the memory of M. de Beauvilliers, I pacified the Regent and averted the storm.

Marshal de Villeroy, at a time when his affairs were considerably embarrassed through his prodigality and love of display, had induced the late King to grant him 50,000 livres a year charged on the revenues of the town of Lyons, for six years ; and when those six years were at an end, the grant had been renewed for a similar term. The second term expired this year, and the Regent offered to renew the grant for the Marshal's life ; but he preferred to pose as

the generous, disinterested man, and not only declined the offer but went about boasting that he had done so. In reality he was refusing nothing; like his father and uncle before him he was, as Governor, absolute master of Lyons; he nominated the Provost of the Merchants, who had absolute control over the finances of the town, and whose balance-sheet was seen by no one except the Governor; even in the late King's time no Intendant had ever been allowed to inspect it. The Marshal, in fact, was King of Lyons, and the Provost of the Merchants his viceroy *ad nutum*; between them they disposed of the immense revenues of the town and pocketed as much of them as they pleased without being accountable to anybody. He was therefore none the poorer for his refusal; but he made it ostentatiously, so that the world might applaud his magnanimity and condemn the easy-going prodigality of the Regent.

He was a man devoid of common sense, but puffed up with vanity; when he found himself in such an exalted position after the death of Louis XIV, he lost his head completely; he began to fancy himself the protector and second father of the King, "the guardian angel of France," the only man in a position to withstand the Regent, and as he had been silly enough to espouse all the prejudices of his patroness Madame de Maintenon, he thought it his duty to thwart him in every possible way. The Duke of Orleans was anxious to avoid a quarrel; moreover, he had never quite shaken off the feeling of awe with which he had regarded the Marshal when a child at Monsieur's Court, and as the commander of the army in which he first saw active service; he tried, therefore, to conciliate him by flattering his vanity and doing all he could to please him. The Marshal, on the other hand, was determined to play a leading part at the Regent's expense; he made common cause with his enemies, and did his best to encourage them to combine in a party; with this object he neglected no opportunity of acquiring such a reputation for disinterested zeal for the public as would increase his own influence.

Madame d'Argenton, after her separation from the Duke of Orleans, had lived for a long time with the Chevalier d'Oppède, a young handsome officer of the Body-guard, nearly related to the Cardinal de Janson. After a time she thought she would like to reconcile her pleasures with her conscience, and by dint of offers very attractive to a

penniless cadet she induced him to leave the service and marry her. The marriage, however, was kept secret from honourable scruples on both sides. She had no children by him, and about this time she lost him. He used to treat her very roughly, and she was easily consoled.

The Countess de Soissons died at Paris; not old, and still very handsome. So much has been said about her in these Memoirs that I need add nothing here. She had for many years led a wandering, unhappy life in great poverty; the Duke of Orleans used to supply her with money from time to time. She left two sons under the care of their uncle Prince Eugène, but they both died young and unmarried. He had arranged a marriage for the elder with the sole heiress of the House of Cybo, who subsequently brought the little States of Massa and Carrara, together with the rest of her great wealth, to the son of the Duke de Modena by one of the Duke of Orleans' daughters. The Count de Soissons also left a daughter in a convent at Turin, under the care of the King of Sicily. Prince Eugène, who survived both his nephews, made her his heiress; and she eventually married the Prince of Saxe-Heilbourghausen, who distinguished himself in the war in Italy, when the Emperor was opposed by the united forces of France, Spain, and Savoy. Thus ended the Soissons branch of the House of Savoy.

Cardinal de Noailles' appeal against the Constitution was published, together with an admirable address on the subject, of which, in consequence of subsequent events, only the first part appeared. He soon had occasion to be sorry that he had not issued the whole of it, and also that he had not issued his appeal at the time when I urged him to do so.

An affair came before the Council of Regency which I must amuse myself by narrating, because it led to a little manœuvre on my part. M. d'Elbœuf was Governor of Picardy and Artois, where he snapped his fingers at the Intendants and took care to fill his pockets. There is a little canton lying between Artois and Flanders, very rich and fertile, known as the district of Lalleu, which has always been under the Government of Flanders and the Estates of Lille. M. d'Elbœuf, who was always trying to enlarge his government, demanded that Lalleu should be separated from Lille and incorporated with the Estates of Artois. I suppress the arguments on both sides, which have no interest.

The Maréchale de Boufflers came to tell me of this claim, which was to be judged immediately by the Council for the Interior, and then reported by d'Antin to the Council of Regency for final decision. The Maréchale cared little which Estates this district was under; but she was afraid that if the question was decided in favour of the Estates of Artois the Duke d'Elbœuf would claim Lalleu as part of his government, though he had said nothing about it as yet. She said she put all her trust in me, and hoped I would do my best to preserve the integrity of her son's government of Flanders. She was right to come to me, for I was a great friend of hers, as I had been of her virtuous husband. I made no promises, however; for I knew the Duke of Orleans' weakness too well not to feel sure that he would never, for the sake of a little boy like the Duke de Boufflers, stand out against the Duke d'Elbœuf; especially when backed up by the Grand Equerry, whose son held the reversion of the government of Picardy. After careful consideration I determined to do nothing for the present; I waited quietly till the affair came up before the Council of Regency, to which the Presidents of all the other Councils had been summoned for the occasion.

As soon as we had taken our seats d'Antin laid his papers on the table and was about to begin his report. "One moment, sir," I said, and, turning to the Regent, told him that, with his approval, it would be as well, before going any further, to ascertain whether M. d'Elbœuf claimed the district of Lalleu as part of his own government, if the case should be decided in favour of the Estates of Artois; because, if so, several of us, including d'Antin, Marshal d'Estrées, and myself, were nearly related to him and ought not to sit in judgement in a matter in which he was interested. I knew well enough that it had been already decided that relationships went for nothing on the Council of Regency, because the King, who was always supposed to be present in person, had the sole right of giving judgement; our speeches and votes being considered to be merely by way of offering advice. I hoped, however, that on the spur of the moment this decision would be forgotten, and so it turned out. The Duke of Orleans said I was quite right, and asked d'Antin how the matter stood. He replied that M. d'Elbœuf had said nothing to him about his government, and he was sure he made no such claim as I had mentioned. I said to

the Regent that in that case it would be well to have the fact placed on record ; and I suggested that His Royal Highness should order d'Antin to write a note on his summary to the effect that, in case the district of Lalleu should be removed from the Estates of Lille to those of Artois, the change should in no wise affect the government, and that Lalleu was to be under the Governor of Flanders as it had always been. The Regent said he saw no objection. D'Antin said it made no difference whether he wrote the note or not, for M. d'Elbœuf claimed nothing. "But, sir," I said, "it would be more regular, and His Royal Highness approves." "Very well," said d'Antin, and he began to write. While he was doing so I suggested to the Regent that it would be just as well if La Vrillière were to make a note to the same effect on the register of the Council ; this seemed so reasonable that he replied at once, "By all means, let it be written down." I looked at La Vrillière, who immediately took his pen and recorded the note on the register ; d'Antin then proceeded with his report.

That evening the Maréchale de Boufflers came to my house, very much put out because the case had been decided in favour of the Estates of Artois, and nothing had been said about the government. "I beg your pardon, Madame," said I, "something was said about it, and something done." I kept her in suspense a little while, and then told her what had taken place. She was highly delighted, and embraced me cordially.

At the very time of her visit M. d'Elbœuf was with La Vrillière, to whom he remarked casually that, since the district of Lalleu had been adjudged to the Estates of Artois, it would for the future be under his government. Seeing that La Vrillière made rather a face at this he went on in great astonishment : "Why, sir, can you doubt it ? The district was subject to the government of Flanders simply because it formed part of the Estates of Lille ; the decision given to-day, declaring it to belong to those of Artois, settles the question of the government beyond a doubt ! " La Vrillière said quietly that the Council had taken a different view, and he advised him to think no more about it. M. d'Elbœuf, much perturbed, asked why he thought the Council had adopted a view which seemed quite incompatible with their decision. Then La Vrillière showed him the register, with the note which he had written by the

express order of the Regent and the Council. M. d'Elbœuf was furious, and said he would go to the Duke of Orleans and get this absurd decision altered. He did go to him; but, as it was a question of expunging from the register a resolution passed with the approval, tacit if not explicit, of every member of the Council, the Regent excused himself on the ground that he could not ask the Council to reconsider a matter which had already been decided. M. d'Elbœuf made a great fuss, but nothing came of it; the district of Lalleu was left subject to the government of Flanders, and still remains so. I had foreseen that the Regent's weakness would require a barrier against the importunities of M. d'Elbœuf, and I was pleased with myself for having provided one so cleverly, without any one perceiving my object. The Maréchale de Boufflers went next day to thank the Regent.

In connection with this affair I must relate an anecdote which illustrates the vacillating character of the Chancellor. As the business was likely to be long the Regent ordered the Council to meet twice on the same day; the morning sitting to be devoted to hearing d'Antin's report only, the discussion and decision to be taken in the afternoon. As we were going out after hearing the report the Chancellor came up to me and said he was aware he was taking a great liberty, but he was particularly anxious to know what opinion I had formed about the case. I replied that, although I should certainly decline to answer that question from any other member, I had no objection to telling him. There were three courses open to the Council: to leave Lalleu as it was; to remove it from the Estates of Lille and adjoin it to those of Artois; or to make it an independent district, with Estates of its own. I told the Chancellor that I was in favour of the last course, briefly explaining my reasons; he replied that he was glad to hear me say so, because it confirmed him in the opinion he had already formed himself; and with sundry complimentary remarks on his part we separated and went to dinner.

When the Council met again at half-past three, d'Antin summed up his report in a speech of admirable lucidity, for in this art he excelled any professional lawyer; his conclusion was in favour of the Estates of Artois. Most of the members who spoke before me were of the same opinion; the others were in favour of the Estates of Lille.

My turn to speak came just before the Chancellor, after whom there remained only the bastards and the Princes of the Blood. I had to suggest a third course, namely, that Lalleu should have Estates of its own ; but, as I knew the Chancellor agreed with me, I refrained from exhausting the arguments in favour of it, in order to leave him something fresh to say, for I thought those who had already spoken would have less difficulty in changing their opinions if they could say they had done so out of deference to the First Magistrate of the kingdom. Nevertheless, I had to show reasons for the course which I advocated, and spoke at some length ; as I proceeded I was surprised to hear voices repeatedly saying, "Why, M. de Saint-Simon is right!" Before I sat down I said that if any of those who had spoken thought I was right there was nothing to prevent them from retracting their previous votes before the final decision. Several members said, "That is true" ; but no one rose to support my view. I understood their little weakness, and was glad I had left some fresh arguments for the Chancellor.

He rose directly I had finished, and began by commending the course which, he said, I had advocated so ably. After summing up the arguments in favour of each solution of the difficulty, he went on to speak of the manner in which the question was affected by the disastrous results of the late war in Flanders, which he said prevented it from being decided on its merits alone ; and he wound up by saying, to my great astonishment, that he regretted having to set aside the claims of justice and equity, but for reasons of State he felt bound to give his vote in favour of the Estates of Artois.

I could not understand how he could have changed his mind so completely within the space of two hours. As soon as I perceived clearly that he had done so, I asked the Count de Toulouse in a whisper not to rise directly the Chancellor had finished, for I wished to speak again ; adding that I had something to tell him which would astonish him. When the Chancellor sat down I asked the Regent's permission to add something to my previous remarks ; not that I had any hopes of making converts to my opinion, but I thought it was only right to bring forward the arguments which I had suppressed in my first speech. I heard the same remarks that I was right, but my success went

no further; the members who had not yet spoken supported the Chancellor, and the decision of the Council was in favour of the Estates of Artois. The Count de Toulouse was very much astonished when I told him of the Chancellor's sudden change; I never said a word about it to the Chancellor himself, nor he to me.

This fertile district of Lalleu is inhabited by well-to-do peasants, cultivating their own land, people of much shrewd common sense; and they had sent deputies to Paris to look after their interests, for this business was of considerable importance to them. These deputies came to me for the first time just as I was starting for the meeting of the Council at which the affair was to be considered. They wanted to talk to me and present their statement; but I had already seen and studied it, together with those of the Estates. I was sorry these peasants had delayed so long to see their judges, for I perceived that they were in the right; but I had no time to talk to them; I cut them short, and got into my carriage.

I was very much surprised to see them arrive again two days afterwards, bringing with them two huge baskets full of most beautiful table-linen. They had heard that I had been the only member of the Council who took their side, and that I had spoken at great length on their behalf; they brought me this linen as a token of gratitude. In vain I told them that I could not accept such a present for doing my duty; they insisted on unfolding some table-cloths and napkins; and when they saw that they must take them back they began to shed tears, and said I looked upon them with contempt, although I had been careful to speak to them with all possible politeness. At last, touched by their honest emotion, I told them that, to show how far I was from looking down on them, I would do for them what I would do for no one else in the world; and I accepted a table-cloth and a dozen napkins. This consoled them a little; they carried off the rest, and left me with a shower of benedictions. I told this story to the Duke of Orleans; but I never mentioned the Chancellor's behaviour to any one except the Count de Toulouse.

CHAPTER II

1717

Unrest in Brittany—Request for a secret interview—Madame d'Alegre—I acquaint the Regent with her mysterious warnings—Ill-health of the King of Spain—Alberoni's warlike preparations—Law and his supporters—The Duke de Noailles and La Trappe—The Mississippi Company—The Count de Rieux—The Poll-tax—The tax-farmers and the Salt-tax—I propose its abolition, but my efforts are foiled—Plots of the First-President and d'Effiat—The old calumnies against the Regent are revived—The Parliament attacks Law—Its protests laid before the King—Argenson—His appointment as Keeper of the Seals and President of the Council of Finance—The Chancellor made scapegoat for the Duke de Noailles.

The Estates of Brittany assembled for their annual meeting, and from the beginning it was evident that storms were brewing: the province had been well worked up by those interested in promoting disorder. When Marshal de Montesquiou came to Rennes to preside over the Estates the nobles went as usual in a body to meet him before he arrived at the town; and they took offence because he remained in his carriage instead of getting on horseback to ride the rest of the way with them; also because he was carried in a chair from his house to the place of assembly instead of walking, escorted by a crowd of nobles who had gone to his house on purpose. So far they were in the right; but it soon became evident that they were determined to dispute everything; they refused to vote the "freewill offering" which they had made annually since 1672, although the sum demanded had been reduced by 1,000,000 livres; they talked of nothing but the ancient privileges they had enjoyed in the time of their Dukes, and wanted to introduce many changes, in spite of the efforts of the Prince de Léon, their President, who was popular among them.

Nine battalions of infantry and eighteen squadrons of cavalry were sent to reinforce the small body of troops already in Brittany; for an outbreak had been expected

for some time. Marshal de Montesquiou had orders to prorogue the assembly if he saw that it was indisposed to obey the King's commands; he put off doing so for a few days, but, as the Estates announced that their decision was final, he dismissed them. This was the beginning of the troubles in that province; they were the result of the machinations of M. and Madame du Maine.

For some time past I had been engaged in a secret and mysterious correspondence which showed me that dangerous plots were being carried on, but left me in total ignorance of any details. Madame d'Alègre, whose husband long afterwards became a Marshal of France, sent a priest to me one morning to ask me to give her a very private audience, warning me at the same time not to go to her house. I knew her very slightly, and had never had any intercourse with her husband. The request seemed very strange, but so was the lady herself; I have spoken of her on the occasion of the marriage of her daughter, Madame de Barbésieux. She arrived at the hour appointed, and began by paying me interminable compliments. I replied briefly, and hoped she was coming to business; but I soon perceived that this lengthy preface was caused by her embarrassment how to begin. Then she began to speak highly of the Duke of Orleans, and praised my attachment to him and my loyalty to his government; to all of which I listened with indescribable impatience. She next assumed the air of an oracle; pursed up her lips, smoothed down her hair, stroked her muff, looked at me as if she would penetrate my innermost heart, then cast down her eyes and made play with her fan, now and then saying a few broken words, and then relapsing into a dull silence.

At last she gave me to understand that a very serious plot was on foot directed against the Duke of Orleans and his government; she had her information, she said, from a sure source; she refused to mention any names, or to disclose anything which would be of use, but kept on telling me to be on my guard and to warn the Duke of Orleans, for whom she expressed unbounded attachment. It was in vain that I told her that all she had been so kind as to say so far was perfectly useless; she had said enough to make me uneasy, but nothing which would enable me to take precautions. I could get nothing further out of her, though our interview lasted nearly two hours, except that

she would come and see me again, and would choose a proper time for telling me more. She enjoined the strictest secrecy upon the Duke of Orleans and myself, and warned me most particularly not to go to her house; for she said the slightest suspicion that she was in communication with me would ruin her.

I was well aware that trouble was brewing in Brittany (this was before the meeting of the Estates); but Madame d'Alègre was a native of Toulouse, and her husband came from Auvergne; I could not see that either of them had any connection with Brittany. She was an eccentric woman, who led a rather retired religious life; and, though clever, she was supposed to be somewhat visionary and fanciful; consequently, I did not attach much importance to what she said, and thought it unnecessary to alarm the Regent by telling him about it.

After the stormy meeting of the Estates of Brittany she came to see me again. She said she had known beforehand what was going to happen, and how the disturbance was brought about; the Regent must not think it was at an end, or that the claims put forward by the Estates were the real object of its promoters: then, taking my hands in hers and resting them on my knees, and casting glances all round her: "Believe me, sir," said she, "and impress it on the Regent, all that is merely a preliminary trial; there is far worse to come: but—and—because——" and a quantity of other broken words, as if she knew a good deal more than she could tell. Then she rose abruptly to go. I tried in vain to get something more out of her. As she was going out she said: "The time is not yet come, but I will see you again; be on your guard, and the Regent too!" With these words she shut the door and departed.

Although this visit was hardly more enlightening than the first, I thought it my duty to tell the Duke of Orleans what had occurred. Though he knew Madame d'Alègre well by repute, and understood her verbiage as little as I did myself, he seemed to attach more importance to the warning than I had expected. He desired me to keep in communication with her; that is, to hold myself ready to receive her at any time, since I was not to go to her house: to express my gratitude, and to do my best to get some definite information out of her. I shall have to recur to this subject more than once.

The King of Spain's health was so bad that towards the end of October he consented to make his will; it was witnessed by six Grandees, but the only persons acquainted with its provisions were the Queen, Cardinal Alberoni, Father d'Aubenton, and the Duke de Popoli. A month later he was much better; he recovered his sleep and his appetite, and increased in weight; but his mind was so enfeebled by the thought of his impending death that he insisted on having his confessor always at his side; he kept him there till the very moment when he went to bed with the Queen, and sometimes sent for him in the middle of the night.

Alberoni's whole attention was given to warlike preparations; he gave out that by the following May the King of Spain would have an effective force of 50,000 infantry and 15,000 cavalry, besides a well-equipped fleet of thirty ships. This force, he said, was not intended to make conquests, but merely to maintain the King's rights and protect his allies. Nobody, however, believed that Alberoni would have gone to such great expense without ulterior objects; Stanhope, the English Ambassador at Madrid, was very uneasy about it; the more so because Alberoni was continually asking him questions about an English squadron which was being fitted out for service in the Mediterranean.

Quite at the close of the year *lettres-de-cachet* were sent to Brittany ordering four gentlemen who had been prominent in their opposition to the measures of the Court to come to Paris and account for their conduct. Their names were MM. de Piré, Bonamour, Noyan, and Guesclairs.

Law continued to see me regularly once a week, in compliance with the Regent's wish. He complained bitterly of the conduct of the Duke de Noailles, who, notwithstanding their outward reconciliation, continued to hamper the operations of the Bank by every means in his power, and fomented opposition to it in the Parliament and Councils. Law had no difficulty in proving to me how mischievous this opposition was; partly because of my personal feelings towards the Duke de Noailles, but also because, in spite of a strong Scotch accent, he had the rare gift of lucidity, and could explain his meaning in a way which left nothing to be desired. The Regent liked Law, partly as the man of his own choice, partly because he always had a fancy

for unusual methods, and saw that the ordinary resources of financiers were exhausted. This preference annoyed Noailles, whose object still was to acquire undivided influence over the Regent, and thereby become Prime Minister. All his flattery had not reconciled Marshal de Villeroy to being a mere figure-head as chief of the Council of Finance, and he often took Law's part against Noailles; though, as the Regent's man, he did not really like him, and fomented underhand opposition to him in the Parliament. That body sought a pretext for interference in the administration, and flattered itself that it had found one in the deplorable condition of the public finances and the unfamiliar remedies adopted by a foreigner like Law.

Dubois unostentatiously sided with Law. He also was ambitious of becoming Prime Minister, and Noailles was the rival whom he most dreaded; he determined to take every opportunity of undermining his position. An alliance between himself and Law was to the advantage of both parties; Law, as a foreigner obnoxious to many men in high places, had every reason to distrust the Regent's weakness; while Dubois, in supporting him, flattered the personal predilections of his master, and at the same time contrived to deal some thrusts at Noailles which were none the less deadly because neither he nor the Regent noticed them for some time. Law did not conceal his growing intimacy with Dubois from me; but he never told me how much this new alliance cost him. He was beginning to have some money to throw about, derived from the business which afterwards led to such abuses under the name of the Mississippi Company; and it was pleasant for Dubois to be able to draw on a secret resource without obligations to any one except a man who was forced to purchase his good-will. Such was the bond of union between these two men. I fancy that, in spite of all Dubois' tricks and caresses, Noailles began to suspect something wrong, for they both had sharp noses; what makes me think so was a move on his part which, considering the terms we were on, astonished me beyond measure.

One day towards the end of summer he was in attendance at the Council of Regency to report on some matters relating to finance, and I was sitting as usual between him and the Count de Toulouse. While a discussion was proceeding he put his mouth close to my ear, and asked me

whether I still took an interest in the abbey of La Trappe. A curt "Yes" was my only reply. "Are not the affairs of the abbey in a very bad condition?" he proceeded. "They cannot possibly be worse," I replied. "I suppose," he continued, "you would be glad to see them put on a sound footing?" "There is nothing I should like better," I said. "Very well, then," said he, "I take a similar interest in the abbey of Sept-Fonts, which is also in a bad way financially; if you will be kind enough to let me have a statement of the liabilities of La Trappe I will see whether something cannot be done for both these abbeys." I replied, without thanking him in any way, that I should be very glad, and would write to La Trappe.

By this time it was our turn to vote on the question before the Council, and nothing more passed between us on the subject. I wrote to La Trappe the same evening, and within a week I was able to give the Duke de Noailles the required statement. He told me to do nothing further at present; he would let me know when the time had come. A week later he advised me to speak to the Duke of Orleans; I did so, and found that he had smoothed away all difficulties; within a fortnight Law began to pay off the debts incurred by the abbey. This was a matter which I had very much at heart, and I had been sorely puzzled how to get a man like the Duke of Orleans to interest himself in it. It was a very remarkable interposition of Providence.

The year 1718 opened with the publication of the edict establishing the Company of the West, for that was the name officially chosen, though that of Mississippi Company finally prevailed in common parlance. Its capital was fixed at 100,000,000 livres. Many people were enriched by speculation in its shares, many others ruined; some of the Princes and Princesses of the Blood, notably Madame la Duchesse, M. le Duc, and the Prince of Conti, found it more profitable than the mines of Potosi.

The Regent was much worried by the perpetual obstacles placed in the way of Law's operations by the Duke de Noailles, aided by his obsequious admirer, the Chancellor. Noailles opposed Law's schemes on principle; the Chancellor helped him by raising objections on points of form and procedure, and the authority he derived from his high office and personal reputation, which was still unimpaired, was

too much for Law. The Regent, determined to support the Scotchman in spite of their opposition, made one more attempt to conciliate them, and at the same time to find out by personal inquiry what was to be said on both sides. In order to talk matters over at leisure and without interruption, he told them that he wished to spend a whole afternoon with them at La Roquette, in a house belonging temporarily to the Duke de Noailles, who afterwards entertained him at supper. Law was also desired to be in attendance; and a long and earnest consultation took place, which proved a death-blow to the two allies.

The Regent thought he discovered nothing but bad faith on the part of Noailles, and a blind resistance on the part of the Chancellor, always a slave to formalities, to any proposals put forward by Law, however well supported by argument and by the public necessities. As I have already remarked, the Scotchman, though he could hardly pronounce our language, had the gift of explaining himself with admirable lucidity; moreover, under an appearance of outward simplicity, he possessed a good deal of natural wit, which sometimes found his adversaries off their guard. He declared that the obstacles which were perpetually thrown in his path deprived his system of all chance of success; and he demonstrated the truth of his assertion so clearly that the Regent determined to sweep the obstacles aside, and let him have a free hand.

Signs of growing discontent and excitement were visible in more than one province, fomented by secret agitators; and this fact was partly the cause of a reduction of 800,000 livres in the amount to be raised by the poll-tax in Languedoc and other favours accorded to that province. Basville also had something to do with it. For more than thirty years he had been the tyrant of Languedoc under the name of Intendant, and was almost universally detested. He had grown so deaf that it was almost impossible to transact business with him, and he felt that he must shortly resign his office; hoping to do so with some appearance of regret on the part of his subjects, he procured them this relief from taxation. He was one of the ablest men in France, and all the Ministers in succession had thought it wise to keep him at a distance lest he should supplant them; they consoled him by giving him absolute authority in his province. He resigned shortly afterwards, and spent the

remainder of his life at Paris on a pension of 12,000 livres ; but his deafness prevented him from seeing any one except his family and a few intimate friends.

The Count de Rieux had an audience of the Regent to justify himself from the charge of stirring up the nobility in Brittany, where, notwithstanding his poverty, he had a good deal of influence. He was a man much given to underground plotting without committing himself ; very proud of his high birth ; secretly connected with personages in high places and with the House of Lorraine ; naturally inclined to oppose any government ; and little influenced by truth, honour, or probity, though the most virtuous and disinterested of men in his talk. The trouble in Brittany was fomented from a distance ; the Bretons were told that if they only held firmly together they might recover their independence. Rieux was their confidential agent at Paris ; and they could not have made a better choice, for he was ambitious and personally interested in their success ; though he had seen no active service and was unknown at Court or in high society, his ability was such that he must have become a prominent figure if the plot had succeeded.

The nobility of Brittany sent a letter to the Regent, copies of which were circulated in great numbers throughout Paris ; it was outwardly submissive and respectful, but strong and even menacing in reality. Two Presidents and four Councillors also arrived as a deputation from the Parliament of Brittany, bearing a letter from that body, couched in terms similar to the letter of the nobility. After several days these deputies were admitted to make their bow to the Regent, but they were not allowed to discuss any kind of business. Three of the gentlemen who had been summoned from Brittany by *lettres-de-cachet* were banished to Burgundy, Champagne, and Picardy ; the fourth, Piré, was unable through illness to travel to Paris, and so escaped banishment.

The Regent's attention was much engaged by the anomalies caused by the manner of collecting the poll-tax ; the more so because discontent was beginning to show itself openly in the Parliament, as well as in some of the provinces. An attempt had been made to impose a progressive poll-tax in Paris and the surrounding district ; but the only result was to increase the expense of collection by 800,000 livres. Then experiments were tried in several districts of the

system devised by Marshal Vauban, little Renauld volunteering to conduct them at his own expense. But the result was the same—increased expense of collecting and no additional revenue. I do not know whether these new experiments were faulty in themselves, or whether they failed in consequence of the obstacles placed in their way by the cruel clan of tax-farmers, backed up as they always are by the officials of the revenue department; but the Regent, who was honestly desirous to relieve the people's burdens, was completely disappointed, and it became necessary to return to the old methods.

Although I have always avoided having anything to do with finance, I have some personal experience of what I have just said about the tax-farmers and officials. President de Maisons had given me a good deal of information about the salt-tax; and I was struck by the absurdity of employing eighty thousand men to collect it, as well as by the extortion practised on the people. Another thing which struck me was that the system is not uniform: in one province the salt-tax is rigorously collected, while in the next salt is free; yet the King derives just as much revenue from one as from the other, and the inhabitants of the free provinces look upon the others, with some reason, as the bond-slaves of those rascally salt-tax collectors, who make their living and grow rich by their extortions.

I thought it would be wise to abolish the salt-tax altogether, and with this object I proposed that the King should buy up all the existing salt-works, and sell the salt to his subjects at a fixed price, without compelling any one to buy more than he really wanted. Practically there were only the salt-works of Brouages to purchase. Besides saving the cost of collecting this odious tax, and relieving the people from the depredations of a horde of officials who would have starved if they had nothing but their wages to live upon, this scheme would be of great benefit to agriculture, for there is a marked superiority in the condition of cattle in those districts which are free from the salt-tax over those where the dearness and scarcity of salt prevents the farmers from giving them a little.

I laid my proposals before the Regent, who highly approved of them; and they were on the point of being carried into effect when Fagon and other officials of the revenue department, who had not been able to oppose them

openly at first, went to work in such a way that they caused them to fall through. Some time afterwards I tried again, and I had every reason to believe that my measure would become law within a week, when the same persons interfered with a similar result. This leads me to state a fact which I could not have believed without my experience in the Council, namely, that it is impossible to carry any reform whatever; so few people really desire it, and so many are personally interested in opposing it! This is a melancholy truth, and it will always be so under a form of government such as ours has been since the days of Cardinal Mazarin. It does something to console those thinking and feeling persons who are no longer called to take part in public affairs.

As the hopes of the malcontents in Brittany rose, so did the ferment in the Parliament. That body has always attempted to interfere with the government during a Regency; and at this time it had in the First-President a leader at once ambitious and unscrupulous, who regarded deceit as an indispensable weapon, nay, as a virtue, in a highly placed official. In this respect his doctrine unfortunately coincided with that of the Regent, so that he actually won his favour by the very qualities which ought to have inspired the most profound distrust. As the obedient bond-servant of the Duke and Duchess of Maine he was fully informed of the progress of their designs in Brittany and elsewhere, and regulated his conduct in the Parliament accordingly, at the same time keeping open communications with the Regent in order to extract money from him. This was easy for him, because d'Effiat was the intermediary always employed by the Regent when the Parliament was concerned;—d'Effiat, who had long been devoted to the Duke of Maine, and, in concert with him, had betrayed his master even in the late King's time.

So, with all his ability, the Regent put his trust in two scoundrels who were in league to betray him; firmly believing that the immense supplies of money which the First-President drew from him from time to time were sufficient to bind him over to his interests, in spite of all other considerations. D'Effiat encouraged this illusion in order to perpetuate the stream of gold which flowed into the First-President's purse, and to keep the Regent himself in the unsuspecting security so necessary to the designs of the two

allies. Such was the blindness of a Prince who had persuaded himself that all men were rogues except a very few, whose intelligence was weakened by the prejudices of their early education, and who, indeed, preferred to be served by rogues, because he thought he knew better how to deal with them.

In the meantime many things combined seemed to presage serious trouble for him, if not his complete overthrow. There was danger threatening from the side of Spain; and calumnious rumours, sedulously instilled into the silly and ignorant persons who always form the majority of the population, were beginning to take effect. There was a complete understanding between Alberoni and M. and Madame du Maine; the alliance formed in the days of Vendôme and the campaign of Lille still subsisted; and the arts employed against the Duke of Burgundy, and, after his death, against the Duke of Orleans, were again put into requisition. Alberoni was now all-powerful in Spain, and he gratified his personal hatred for the Duke of Orleans by encouraging the King and Queen in their passionate wish to reign in France in case of our King's death; he caused them to regard with suspicion the most innocent acts of the Regent, even such as were most favourable to Spain.

Marshals de Villeroy and Villars, ambitious of playing a leading part, joined heartily in the movement against the Regent, in spite of all the favours they received from him. Marshal de Villeroy, in particular, adopted a very shabby method of reviving the old calumnies. He used to lock up the King's linen, bread, and other necessaries, and kept the key on his person night and day; when it was wanted he would delay bringing it, so that people might observe his care and admire his wise precautions for preserving the King's life; just as if poison could not have been administered in his meat, his drink, and many other things which could not be kept under lock and key. But it all helped to make people talk and to keep alive the old suspicions and rumours. Villeroy had got M. de Beaufort on the brain; he fancied that, like him, he was the idol of the market-places, but he hoped that his popularity and influence with the Parliament would save him from M. de Beaufort's fate and speedy downfall. He was always paying court to the Parliament. That body expected him, on his part, to instil respect for its pretensions into the mind of the young King

and to join in opposition to the Regent ; and he did both to the best of his ability.

The Parliament was the piece on which the leaders of the cabal mainly relied to win the game which they proposed to play ; for, although they meditated a flagrant infringement of the law, they had to make the public believe that the law was on their side ; to violate it with impunity they had to make the Parliament their accomplice. But it was necessary to proceed with caution, to accustom it by degrees to a spirit of opposition which should eventually take it a good deal further than most of its members ever intended to go. With this object the indignation of the many honest, well-meaning men among them was aroused by stories of the Regent's public extravagance and private immorality ; their prejudices against Law as a foreigner and a Protestant were appealed to ; while the notion that the Parliament was called upon to interfere in the government for the safety of the State touched the pride of every member of that body. Such was the design of the leaders of the cabal ; it was perseveringly followed up, and to all appearance was sure of success ; but Providence, which watches over child-Kings and their dominions, brought it all to nought.

By way of preparing the public mind, the Parliament published a statement of the grievances complained of, which was widely distributed ; it related not only to the finances and the favour shown to Law, but to the form of the administration ; especially the Councils, which were declared to have made the transaction of business more tedious and much more costly than it was before. When it was thought that the moment for action had arrived, the Parliament assembled, on the 14th of January, on the pretext of registering the decree creating two new official posts, those of Treasurer to the Building department and Silversmith to the Stables, which had been postponed from time to time. Not only did the Parliament modify this edict considerably, but it continued to hold meetings for several days in succession, at which some very audacious resolutions were passed ; and the Provost of the Merchants was ordered to attend with the accounts of the Hôtel de Ville stock. The resolutions were afterwards committed to writing in the shape of a formal remonstrance, in which Law, though not mentioned by name, was violently attacked, as was the whole administration of the Regent. It was, in fact, the assertion of the

inherent right of the Parliament to interfere with public affairs, and to set up an authority which would counterbalance that of the Regent and deprive him of all but the mere shadow of power.

When these proceedings were reported to him he spoke to me about them with very unusual heat and indignation. I answered him not a word. We were walking up and down the gallery and long saloon which look out on the Rue St. Honoré. He insisted on having a reply. Then I said coolly that, as he was aware, I never opened my lips to him on the subject of the Parliament or anything remotely connected with it; but, since he compelled me to speak my mind, I must tell him that I was not in the least surprised at what had happened; I had predicted long ago that his weakness in dealing with the Parliament would force him eventually to take some very serious and dangerous steps to vindicate his authority, unless he was content to be Regent in name only. He stopped suddenly, coloured up, rested his clenched fists on his sides, and, turning to me, said, very angrily: "*Mordieu!* it is all very well for you to talk like that!—you, who are as unchangeable as the Almighty, and outrageously pertinacious!" I smiled, and replied with still more marked coldness: "You do me great honour, Sir, in saying so; but, if I really have too much consistency and pertinacity, I wish I could impart my surplus stock to you. It would make two perfect men of us, and you stand greatly in need of it!" He had not a word to say in reply; he recommenced his walk, with more hasty strides; his head bent down, as it usually was when he was perplexed and out of temper; he never spoke till he had walked from the saloon to the farther end of the gallery; as we turned back he began talking of something else, and I gladly seized the opportunity to get away from the subject of the Parliament.

On the 26th of January the Parliament went to lay its remonstrances before the King, in the presence of the Duke of Orleans. The First-President read them out; they were extremely strong against the administration, and contained several demands which showed to what a pitch the pretensions of the Parliament had risen. The Regent said not a word; the King replied that his Chancellor would render them his reply; the Chancellor then said that when the King had taken the advice of his Council he would send

them his commands, to which he hoped (a remarkably feeble expression to use) they would render prompt obedience. That same evening the Duke of Orleans caused a number of copies to be distributed of the letters-patent registered in Parliament on the 21st of February, 1641, in the presence of Louis XIII, which reduced the Parliament to its proper functions of a court for the trial of lawsuits, and specially forbade it to interfere in any way with the government. This was supported by quotations from similar ordinances issued by King John, Francis I, Charles IX, and by Louis XIII himself; and others ought to have been added from the reign of Louis XIV.

I have continued the story of these first movements on the part of the Parliament to the end, so as not to interrupt the relation of another affair which came to a crisis on the 28th of January, the day following that on which the First-President reported the result of his audience of the King. As the Regent found himself more and more embarrassed, he began to talk to me more freely about persons and things respecting which he had hitherto been on his guard against my prejudices. He was in great distress when he perceived at last that the Duke de Noailles and Law could never get on together, and that he must make a final choice between the two; he often spoke to me about it, and I also heard all that was going on from Law.

Whatever may have been the merits of Law's system, he believed in it thoroughly himself; personal gain was not his motive; he was quite honest and disinterested in his desire to push matters forward as fast as possible. Consequently, he was exasperated by the impediments placed in his way by the duplicity of the Duke de Noailles, and not less so by the irritating formal delays interposed by the Chancellor acting in concert with Noailles. He often told me his troubles, and more than once was on the point of throwing up the whole business. He knew that he had a useful ally in the Abbé Dubois, but he was unfortunately absent in England; Law tried hard to induce me to act for him in his absence, but this I declined to do; I knew the suspicious nature of the Regent too well; he looked upon me, quite rightly, as the declared enemy of the Duke de Noailles, and nothing I could say on that subject would have had any influence on him. Besides this, I was really unable to make up my mind as to the best course with

regard to the finances; and, much as I hated the Duke de Noailles, I would not on that account help to commit the Regent and the country to a system so completely untried as that of Law. So I remained quiet, and held a middle course with regard to the Regent: I took care to know what was going on, and did not discourage him from talking to me; at the same time, I never introduced the subject of my own accord, and was careful not to commit myself. After the failure of the interview at La Roquette, however, I saw that he had made up his mind, and that the crisis was only delayed by his irresolution at the moment for action.

At last the Duke of Orleans took me completely into his confidence, and consulted me as to the best person to hold the Seals and preside over the finances; Law had often discussed the same question with me, and he was very anxious that the finances should be entrusted to Argenson, whom he had frequently consulted and who seemed to enter into his ideas. Argenson was an extremely clever man, with a versatile mind; ready to adapt himself to anything likely to advance his fortunes. In the matter of birth he was superior to most men of his profession; and for a long time he had presided admirably over the police. He was not in the least afraid of the Parliament, which had often attacked him in vain; and he had frequently befriended persons of quality by concealing the adventures of their sons and other relations from the King and Pontchartrain; merely youthful escapades for the most part, which would, however, have ruined them completely if Argenson had not promptly used his authority to hush them up.

He had a terrible countenance, reminding one of the three judges of the infernal regions; but, in spite of that, he was extremely witty, and ready to make fun out of anything. If ever there was a riot or disturbance he showed himself bold and courageous; consequently he had the common people well in hand. He had established the police of Paris on such an admirable footing that the habits and mode of life of each individual out of its immense population were reported to him daily; when a case was brought before him he showed exquisite tact in deciding whether he should deal severely with it or not; at the same time, though he made the most innocent tremble before him, he was always inclined naturally to the side of leniency. His own morals

were somewhat akin to those of the persons who had to appear before him; so that in the exercise of his distasteful and apparently rigorous functions he was always ready to make allowance for human frailty. When he felt himself at his ease among the rather obscure friends whom he preferred, (for he put more confidence in them than in persons of higher station), he gave himself up to merriment, and his conversation was delightful. He had a tincture of literature; but not much real capacity for business; this deficiency was, however, made good by his natural cleverness and a thorough knowledge of the world, very rarely found in a man of his position.

Under the late King he had surrendered himself to the Jesuits, but he took care to do as little harm as possible; he found it necessary to keep up a show of persecution, but he did so in order to prevent persecution from being carried too far, and to enable him to assist the victims. As his own advancement was his guiding star, he took care to be on good terms alike with the King, the Ministers, the Jesuits, and the public. He was clever enough, as we have seen, to render a service to the Duke of Orleans, at a time when he was in a very painful position, in the affair of the friar arrested by Chalais; and the Duke of Orleans never forgot it. Since then he had made advances to me, in a self-respecting manner; he never called on me, but he showed me every attention in his power; and he had been kind enough to undertake the task of putting in order the temporal affairs of the convent of the Visitation at Chaillot, in which one of Madame de Saint-Simon's sisters, a person of great merit, was a nun.

But, as he wanted to conciliate everybody, he had also, during the late reign, entered into relations with the bastards which were much more intimate than either the Duke of Orleans or I suspected, and he had kept them up since. Not being aware of that fact, however, I thought he would be a fitting person to take charge of the finances, and also that it would be wise to entrust him with the Seals as well; not only because it would add to his authority, but because it was essential for the Regent to have a Keeper of the Seals of a bold, decided character; not disposed, for his own sake, to stand any nonsense from the Parliament. The Regent fully agreed with me, as did Law; the matter was talked over and decided between us three, and, for fear of anything

leaking out, it was determined to make the change on the earliest possible day. Friday, the 28th of January, was chosen, in order to let the Parliament first get over the business of presenting their remonstrances to the King.

I asked the Regent to allow me to see Argenson beforehand, so that I might make him understand clearly that he was expected to work in harmony with Law, and he consented; so on the Thursday morning I sent a note asking Argenson to come to my house that evening, as I had some urgent and very important business to discuss with him. It was not that I had any doubt of his accepting such an offer, but I knew that Cardinal de Noailles would lose a staunch ally in the Chancellor, and I wished to take this favourable opportunity of conciliating the future Keeper of the Seals in his favour. Argenson came punctually at the appointed hour, and I did not keep him long in suspense. I saw that he disliked taking the responsibility of the finances, though much flattered by the offer of the Seals; indeed even in his first surprise he was sufficiently master of himself to raise a good many objections, though he did not carry them far enough to risk losing the Seals. I carefully explained to him the Regent's wishes about Law, and the kind of help expected from him with regard to the Parliament; telling him plainly that the offer of the Seals was conditional on his acceptance of the Finances and hearty co-operation with Law. As for the Parliament, he was in cordial agreement with the Duke of Orleans and myself; in that respect he was just the man we wanted. He said he felt himself highly honoured by the offer of the Seals, for which he thought, quite rightly, that he was indebted to me. I made a modest reply, but for reasons of my own I was not displeased that he should know how much I had to do with it.

When the principal subject was exhausted I took advantage of a renewal of his expressions of eternal gratitude to beg him to befriend and assist Cardinal de Noailles, whose interests, I said plainly, I regarded as my own. I told him that I was well aware of his close connection with the Jesuits and the party of the Constitution, and I could understand that under the late King such a connection was unavoidable for a man holding the office of Lieutenant of Police; I felt sure, however, that he could not approve of the violent and tyrannical methods adopted by the party of the Constitu-

tion; and now that times were changed I hoped his enlightened mind and great experience would enable him to choose the right course for the interests of the State and of true religion; of course without identifying himself with one party in a manner unbecoming the Chief Magistrate of the kingdom. We had a long discussion on the subject, but though he talked in a most complimentary way I noticed that he did not seem very hearty about it; I hoped, however, that this might be attributed to a natural reluctance to recant the opinions he had hitherto professed, and that an interview with Cardinal de Noailles would have more effect. I asked him, as a personal favour to me, to meet the Cardinal, and he readily consented; but he stipulated that the meeting should be at my house, and in the evening, so as not to attract attention. We parted about ten o'clock, with renewed assurances on his part that he would never forget his obligations to me.

Early next morning La Vrillière went to the Chancellor to demand the Seals, and to tell him on behalf of the Regent to go to his house at Fresnes till further orders. The Chancellor asked to be allowed to see the Regent, but being informed that he could not, wrote him a letter which La Vrillière undertook to deliver. He then wrote a note to the Duke de Noailles, and went to inform his wife of his misfortune. Next day he went to Fresnes, which is on the road from Paris to Meaux; and his wife, who had lately been confined, joined him there as soon as her health would permit.

Noailles, thus warned by the Chancellor's note, easily guessed what was to happen about the finances; and he resolved to be beforehand with the Regent. He went to him at once, and, seeing the Seals on the table, was disingenuous enough to ask what had happened. The Regent was so good-natured as to tell him, whereupon Noailles replied that he saw the cabal had got the upper hand, and he thought he had better resign his office. "Do not you ask any favour?" said the Regent. "None whatever," replied Noailles. "I intend," said the Regent, "to give you a seat in the Council of Regency." "I shall not avail myself much of the privilege," replied Noailles arrogantly; —and he told a stinking lie,[1] for he came to the very first meeting of the Council, and never missed one afterwards.

[1] "Il mentit bien puamment."

Argenson arrived a moment later, and remained alone with the Regent for a short time; when he left it was publicly announced that he was appointed Keeper of the Seals and President of the Council of Finance; in the afternoon he took the oaths in the presence of the King, and received the Seals from his hands.

Thus the Chancellor was made the scapegoat for the sins of his friend. Noailles had used him as a shield for himself, and had cruelly abused the confidence placed in him by an upright, honourable man, who in his ignorance of the world looked solely for guidance to the friend who had been the means of placing him in his high office. The Regent had soon repented of his precipitation in the choice of a Chancellor on Noailles' recommendation, but he was none the less affected by the general pity expressed for Daguesseau. The whole legal profession sided with a chief so devoted to their interests, and sang his praises the more loudly because they involved by implication a severe censure on the Regent and his administration; all those who were caballing against the Government joined in, and they were assisted by the numerous echoes which repeat all that they hear.

It had cost the Duke of Orleans a sharp struggle before he could make up his mind to this act of decision; now that he had made it he was depressed at the manner in which it was received by the public, and he fell back into his old weakness of trying to conciliate the opposition party. Noailles' cleverness and his numerous clan of relations frightened him. Not content with giving him a place in the Council of Regency, while the Chancellor was exiled and deprived of the Seals merely for acting with him, he gave Noailles, unasked, the reversion of his post as Captain of the Guard for his son, a child not yet five years old, and really seemed grateful to him for accepting it. The public was as much annoyed by the favours showered on Noailles as by the disgrace of the Chancellor; and his removal from the finances was the only part of the Regent's action which was received with applause.

CHAPTER III

1718

The Duke and Duchess of Lorraine visit Paris—His claims and his treaty with the Regent—St. Contest—My objections—The Regent's hoax—His real opinion of me—The Regent's mistresses—La Trappe and Sept-Fonts—Death of the Abbé d'Estrées—Cardinal de Trémouille appointed to Cambrai in his place—Broglio's suggestions regarding the army adopted by the Regent—Death of the King's physician and appointment of his successor—Chirac and the Botanical Gardens—Fire on the Seine—Death of the Queen of England at St. Germain.

On the 30th of January, without any previous notice of his intention, the Regent brought his son to the meeting of the Council of Regency, saying that he came merely with the object of learning, and would take no part in the proceedings. I do not know who advised him to make this premature experiment; it did not turn out very satisfactorily.

On the 7th of February the Regent received a deputation from the Parliament. Their spokesman, the First-President, made a strong attack on the system of Councils, which, he said, caused great delay and inconvenience in the transaction of public business. This was a matter quite beyond the competence of the Parliament; which had, moreover, itself approved the institution of the Councils on the opening day of the Regency.

About the middle of February the Duke and Duchess of Lorraine arrived in Paris with their little Court, and stayed about six weeks; the Duke under the *incognito* of Count de Blamont, in order to avoid disputes about his treatment. His object was to acquire some additions to his territory on the side of Champagne, on the strength of old claims which had been expressly set aside in several treaties, especially in that which restored the Dukes of Lorraine to their sovereignty; and also to obtain the King's recognition of his claim to rank as a Royal Highness. He thought it hard that the Duke of Savoy who, like himself, had married a

sister of the Duke of Orleans, should be treated as a crowned head while he was not; especially as the House of Lorraine is undoubtedly more distinguished than that of Savoy. Both have chimerical claims to royalty, the Duke of Lorraine styling himself King of Jerusalem, and the Duke of Savoy, King of Cyprus. But this Duke of Savoy, who was the Duke of Orleans' brother-in-law, and who became King of Sicily, and afterwards of Sardinia, was the first of his race to claim that his ambassadors should be treated as those of a crowned head, though he did not venture to aspire to the title of Majesty. The difference between his position and that of the Duke of Lorraine was that the situation of his dominions gave him considerable influence in Italy, especially in time of war; whereas not a single Court in Europe required any help from the Duke of Lorraine.

However, the Duke of Lorraine thought this a favourable opportunity to push his pretensions. The Duke of Orleans was extremely fond of his sister, who had been his companion up to the time of her marriage; he also invariably showed great deference to the wishes of Madame, so long as she did not interfere with his private amusements; and she, besides being much attached to her daughter, was, as a thorough German, always zealous for the dignity and grandeur of the House of Lorraine. He was, therefore, easily talked over; at the same time he was quite conscious that his conduct in alienating a portion of the King's dominions, which had been placed in his guardianship, might some day arouse unpleasant comments; and he feared lest, at a time when unmistakeable signs of a concerted movement against him were visible in so many quarters, he might meet with opposition on the part of Marshal d'Huxelles which would cause the failure of the scheme. It occurred to him that if he could take the actual drawing up of the treaty out of the Marshal's hands he might find him more tractable when it was merely a question of approving what had been already done. He told him, accordingly, that there were a number of petty local disputes to be arranged with the Duke of Lorraine, and some claims of his to be looked into; but he thought they would give him more trouble than they were worth, and take up time which might be more usefully employed; so he thought of employing St. Contest, who, having been long Intendant of Metz, knew the localities and all details of the Duke of Lorraine's claims, to act as the

King's commissioner to arrange a treaty, to be afterwards submitted to the Council of Regency. The business had no attractions for Marshal d'Huxelles, and did not seem sufficiently important to arouse his jealousy; so he consented readily, reserving to himself the right of grumbling afterwards in conjunction with his friend M. du Maine; who, for his part, was always finding fault with the most innocent, and even the most useful, of the Regent's measures, and was only too delighted to find him doing a thing really open to reproach.

St. Contest was just the man the Regent wanted; he was clever and capable, with insinuating manners; though his appearance was clumsy, heavy, and rustic, he had plenty of acuteness and cunning, and readily understood a hint; above all his great object was to please the Regent. He conducted this affair to the mutual satisfaction of the Regent and the Duke of Lorraine, and it did not take long. When it was well advanced the Duke of Orleans set about to procure the approval of the leading members of the Council of Regency. The Princes of the Blood, greedy where their own interests were concerned, knew and cared nothing about this affair, nor were the bastards likely to offer any opposition. The Keeper of the Seals thought only of how to consolidate his newly acquired position; Marshal de Villeroy, who might have found in this business a justifiable vent for his animosity against the Regent, was held back by his brother-in-law the Grand Equerry; as his protégé Tallard was by the Rohans, who were influenced by Madame de Remiremont and Madame d'Espinoy. The Duke de Noailles and his friend d'Effiat did not care to make a fuss in a matter which concerned neither the Parliament nor the gown in general. The braggart Villars was always as supple as a kid-glove. Marshal d'Estrées felt that the treaty was bad, and let his opinion be perceived, but he was too timid to oppose the Regent openly: the same may be said of Marshal d'Huxelles, who went about finding fault in private; the difference between them was that d'Estrées was honestly sorry to see the Regent doing what he thought wrong; whereas Huxelles was delighted, and chuckled over his blunder with his friend M. du Maine. D'Antin was too good a courtier, and on too bad a footing with the Regent, to give any trouble. As for the members composing the tail of the Council, they never gave any sign of life; only

Torcy, a clear-sighted and upright man, occasionally expressed his opinions ; but with so much circumspection that to say he did so modestly would be far too weak a term.

The Duke of Orleans had not forgotten the previous occasion when I opposed him in the Council, nor our subsequent agreement ; he guessed that I should not be brought easily to approve of a treaty such as this, and talked over the subject with me three or four times very affectionately. I expostulated against the cession of parts of Champagne ; and, with regard to the rank of Royal Highness, told him plainly that only witchcraft could have blinded his eyes to such a degree as to lead him to degrade his own dignity and that of the Princes of the Blood by raising the Duke of Lorraine to their level : an insignificant Prince, without the smallest influence, whose House had always been the enemy of his own, and had missed no opportunity of injuring it, and who had himself been always subservient to the Court of Vienna.

My remonstrances produced no effect beyond making him thoughtful and melancholy. If he had not concealed the Duke of Lorraine's visit from me till the very last moment I should have done my best to make it a condition that no favours were to be asked ; and I believe the Duke of Orleans had not expected anything of the sort. He took a few turns up and down the room, and then said he would send St. Contest to talk to me, who would perhaps be able to put the question in a different light, and begged me, as a favour to himself, which, he said, I could not refuse, to listen to him. Of course I consented, and he immediately changed the conversation.

St. Contest was a great friend of mine, and his father and grandfather had been much attached to my father. He made an appointment with me, and spent a whole afternoon in trying to talk me over ; but he could show me no reason why the Duke of Lorraine should be turned into a Royal Highness, and have a portion of the province of Champagne incorporated with his dominions, beyond the fact that he was brother-in-law to the Duke of Orleans, who happened to be Regent and therefore in a position to confer these benefits upon him. At last St. Contest, hoping to embarrass me, asked me what report he was to make to the Duke of Orleans about our conference. "Tell him," I said, "exactly what I have told you : that if he is bold and generous enough

to give away the territory of the country and the King's dignity for nothing, I am not ; he must consider what answer he will make to the King when he demands an account of his guardianship, and, in the meantime, how he will face the disapproval of the public ; but that is his business. Tell him, however, that I, who am more cautious and more patriotic, more jealous for the integrity of our country and for the royal dignity, will never lay myself open to the reproach of having consented to a treaty which wantonly infringes both ; and that for the sake of a Prince who is of all men the least deserving of such a favour ; tell him that, although I know my opposition will be quite unavailing, I shall oppose it to the utmost extent of my power, simply because I feel that my conscience and my honour compel me to do so ! " St. Contest, startled at my firmness, asked whether I really meant him to repeat the words I had just used. I said I did, and that I had used even stronger language to the Regent himself.

After hearing St. Contest's report, the Duke of Orleans again sent for me, and, seeing that further arguments were useless, he asked me, as a favour, to absent myself from the Council when the treaty came before it for discussion. I agreed to do so, and felt much relieved by the request, for I could not prevent the treaty from passing, and my opposition would only have given rise to talk and caused annoyance to the Duke of Orleans. He had already availed himself of this expedient on one or two occasions. I got La Vrillière to make excuses for my absence on the ground of ill-health, and that it might be less marked I stayed away from the next meeting also, on the same plea. The treaty passed the Council without any opposition, though nobody really approved of it.

I cannot refrain from relating an incident which occurred during the Duke of Lorraine's visit, because, though trifling in itself, it is characteristic of the Duke of Orleans. I was walking with him in the small garden of the Palais-Royal, and we were discussing some business, which had nothing to do with the Lorraine treaty, when he suddenly broke off what he was saying, and, turning to me : " I am going to tell you something which will give you great pleasure," said he. Then he proceeded to tell me that he was weary of the life he was leading, that he had come to an age when it was no longer attractive, and he had made up his mind to give

up his usual habits and spend his evenings decently and soberly, sometimes in his own rooms, sometimes with the Duchess. His health would be the better for it, he said, and he would have more time for business; but he could not make the change till after the departure of the Duke and Duchess of Lorraine, because he would be bored to death if he had to sup every night with them and a pack of women in the Duchess of Orleans' rooms; as soon as they were gone, however, I might depend upon it there would be no more suppers with *roués* and whores (such was his own expression) and he would lead a more respectable life, better fitting his age and position.

I was equally astonished and delighted at hearing this, for I was warmly attached to him; and the assurances I gave him of my affection, as I thanked him for taking me into his confidence, came from my heart. I said I had long ceased to remonstrate with him on his mode of life because I realised that it was useless; but he knew how much I had grieved over it, and he could readily understand what pleasure he had just given me. He assured me again that his mind was quite made up; and then I left him, because the time for his evening amusements had nearly arrived. The very next day I heard from a person, who had it from one of the *roués*, that he had no sooner taken his place at the supper-table than he burst out laughing, and told his companions that he had just taken me in splendidly; and he proceeded to repeat our conversation, which was received with applause and laughter. This was the only time he ever amused himself at my expense; it was silly of me to be taken in, but my sudden joy overcame my reflection. I never gave him the pleasure of letting him know that I was aware of his joke, nor did he venture to allude to it himself.

He had, however, a favourite trick which he used to play on me, to which, owing to my quick temper, I invariably fell a victim: he would suddenly interrupt a conversation on important affairs by some incongruous piece of buffoonery. I never could help rising to it; I used to get so angry that I wanted to leave him, telling him that if he wanted to joke I was ready enough to join him, but that to mingle buffoonery with really serious business was intolerable. He used to roar with laughter; the more so because as it was no rare occurrence I ought to have been on my guard, and was angry with myself for being taken in; then he would go back to

the subject we had been talking about. I suppose Princes must sometimes have their jokes with those whom they condescend to treat as friends. He well knew that I was really his friend, and though he was not always pleased with what he called my hardness, and his weakness led him sometimes to conceal plans of which he knew I should disapprove, he really felt for me all the friendship, esteem, and confidence of which his nature was capable. When out of temper with me, which was very seldom, he showed it by maintaining a sulky silence; but it never lasted long—he could not keep it up himself. I always perceived at once when he was coming round, and asked him straight out what was the matter, and what lies people had been telling him; then he felt ashamed of himself, and told me all about it in a friendly way; and we parted on better terms than ever.

I found out quite by accident what he really thought of me, and I will record it in this place, so as to get rid of all these trifles at once. He was returning one afternoon from the Tuileries to the Palais-Royal after the Council of Regency, in company with his son the Duke of Chartres, and the Bailli de Conflans, First Gentleman of his Chamber. I forget what had occurred at the Council; but he immediately began talking to his son about me, and pronounced such a eulogium on me as I should be ashamed to repeat. I will merely say that he dilated on his good fortune in having a friend like me, so constant, so disinterested, so firm; one whom he could always trust, who had rendered him the greatest services, and who spoke his mind frankly and freely. He told his son he wished him to appreciate me, and to realise how much happiness and support he had found in my friendship and counsels. He went on talking in this strain till they arrived at the Palais-Royal; and the Bailli de Conflans, who was rather astonished, told me all he had said a day or two afterwards, under promise of secrecy. I confess I have never been able to forget it. It is a fact that, in spite of all that people could do to make mischief between us, he always came back to me; and never found himself in a difficulty without opening his heart to me and asking my advice—not that he always took it, for he often let himself be over-persuaded by others whom he consulted afterwards.

He was not a man to be content with one mistress; he

required variety, and his *roués* and valets were always ready to procure it for him. Among the ladies they presented to him there was always one who specially took his fancy. Madame de Sabran, by birth a Foix-Rabat, in order to escape from her domestic circle, had married a man bearing a distinguished name, but utterly devoid of merit. It is impossible to imagine any one more perfectly beautiful than she was, or more attractive; her air and manners were noble and dignified, yet simple and natural; she seemed quite unconscious of her lovely face and beautiful tall figure; and, when she chose, her modest looks would have deceived anybody. She was very clever and amusing, not in the least ill-natured, and charming company, especially at table; in short, she had all the qualities which the Duke of Orleans most appreciated, and she soon became his declared mistress—without prejudice to others. It was she who told him one evening, at supper with his *roués*, that Princes and flunkeys were made of the same clay, of a special sort which the Creator had set apart from that out of which He fashioned the rest of mankind. I had no more acquaintance with his mistresses than I had with his *roués*, and the subject was never mentioned between us. There was one good thing in connection with them, they had very little influence over him, and he never told them any secrets; he gave them money, but not too lavishly; in short, he amused himself with them, but took care to keep them in their proper place. I must now return from the digression into which I have been led.

Two decrees of the Council relating to the currency furnished the Parliament with a pretext for giving fresh trouble. Remonstrances, aimed at Law, were presented to the King, to which the Keeper of the Seals made a vague reply; dissatisfied with this, the Parliament drew up fresh remonstrances, and appointed a committee of fourteen members to consider what further proceedings should be taken.

The Keeper of the Seals kept his promise with regard to the conference between him and Cardinal de Noailles. They met one evening at my house by appointment, and we had a long discussion. Nothing could have been better than the Cardinal's manner, and he spoke admirably; except that he was perfectly polite, nothing could have been worse than the constrained and disjointed utterances of

the Keeper of the Seals. I did my best to thaw his icy respect; but I soon perceived that the old leaven was still at work, and that he would never get rid of the Jesuitical leanings which he had adopted under the late King. Though the conference passed off with mutual civility no good came of it, except that the Cardinal saw clearly how he stood, and I realised that I must always be on my guard against Argenson in anything connected with Rome, the Jesuits, or the Constitution.

I was better satisfied with Law since the Duke de Noailles had ceased to direct the finances. It was to him that I had recourse about the affairs of the two abbeys, La Trappe and Sept-Fonts, and he was extremely kind in facilitating matters. The payments were made with great regularity; and on each occasion I took care that Sept-Fonts should have its proper share; moreover, when the Regent granted me an extra sum for La Trappe I obtained a similar grant for Sept-Fonts. I may say at once that La Trappe obtained in all 40,000 crowns, and Sept-Fonts more than 80,000; by which grants these two saintly houses were saved from certain and imminent ruin. Although I was still at daggers drawn with the Duke de Noailles, I would not allow myself to forget that he was the originator of this excellent work; so every time I received a payment from Law I drew him aside at the next meeting of the Council and told him how I had divided it between the two abbeys. He bowed and thanked me; and then I took no further notice of him till the next occasion. These brief colloquies occasioned some surprise and speculation among those who witnessed them; it was supposed at first that we were reconciled; afterwards nobody knew what to think. I merely laughed and left them to their conjectures. These payments were the occasion of my forming an acquaintance with the Abbot of Sept-Fonts, which developed into a tender and reciprocal friendship. He was a very amiable and saintly man.

The Chancellor de Pontchartrain arranged a marriage for his grandson, Maurepas, with the daughter of La Vrillière, in whose house he lived while learning from him his duties as Secretary of State. He has far surpassed his master, and has fully profited by the lessons of his grandfather, whom he strongly resembles. He is now a Minister, and it is very inadequate praise to say that he is far the best the King has had since the death of the Duke of Orleans. He

was fortunate enough to find a wife suited to him in every way, and their marriage has been very happy. I can no longer consider it a misfortune for them that they have no children.[1]

Fagon, when he lost his appointment of First Physician by the King's death, had retired to the Faubourg St. Victor; where he was allowed to retain the management of the Royal garden for growing rare medicinal plants. He died about this time in a very pious frame of mind; at a great age for a man of his debilitated and feeble constitution. Considering the intimate union between him and Madame de Maintenon, to whom he owed his appointment, it is rather singular that they should never have met since the King's death.

I have several times had occasion to mention the Abbé d'Estrées, and to describe his character. He was in the enjoyment of good health at an age when he might reasonably expect to hold the see of Cambrai, to which he had been appointed, for many years, when he was seized with an inflammation of the bowels, brought on by a quack medicine which he insisted on taking without any necessity, merely as a precaution. Feeling much better, he made up his mind that his illness was of no consequence, and gave a dinner-party to which we were invited. Just before dinner his pains came on again; nevertheless, he insisted on sitting down with us; but by the time the dessert was brought in he looked so ill that we saw he had better be left to himself. Cardinal de Noailles was sent for, and arrived an hour later. The Abbé made a good use of the short time remaining to him; received the Sacraments in the morning, and died next evening. He was a friend of mine, and I regretted his loss; for, though he was rather conceited and had some absurd foibles, there was much good in him; he was honourable, upright, and trustworthy.

The Duke of Orleans lost in him a faithful servant, and was in some embarrassment as to the choice of his successor at Cambrai. I advised him to decide at once, to avoid the importunities of the many applicants for this rich appointment, and suggested that he should give it to Cardinal de la Trémouille. I did not know him; but, as the King's representative at Rome, he required pecuniary assistance, for he was poor and extravagant; and his appointment to this rich see would spare the King the necessity of giving

[1] All Saint-Simon's own children died at an early age.

him money in other ways. He was not in the least likely to reside at Cambrai, and in fact never did so. My advice was taken, and he was appointed.

The Regent, always lavish of favours which cost him nothing, and too often of those which cost him dear, made a promotion of twenty-six Lieutenant-Generals, and thirty-six *Maréchaux-de-camp*. Confusion of social ranks was already so wide-spread that eighty persons fancied themselves entitled by their position to ask for the regiments vacant by the promotions to the rank of *Maréchal-de-camp*. I obtained the regiment of Sourches for the Marquis de Saint-Simon, who was then serving in the French Guards. He was consumptive and died three months afterwards; it was a great pity, for he was a very promising officer, full of honour, courage, and zeal, with a remarkably agreeable face. I obtained the regiment for his brother; but not without a good deal of trouble, for he was still being whipped as a school-boy.

The Duke of Orleans let himself be talked into consenting to two measures affecting the army, for both of which he had reason to be sorry afterwards. The elder Broglio, son-in-law of the late Chancellor Voysin, had through his influence become a Lieutenant-General and Inspector of Infantry, though a notorious coward and dishonoured in other ways. He was an impudent, spiteful man who spoke ill of everybody, for which he had been severely corrected more than once; a great liar, and wonderfully audacious; the repeated affronts to which he had been forced to submit had not the least effect on his conceited, overbearing manner. He had a high opinion of himself and a profound contempt for others; he was avaricious in the extreme, horribly debauched and impious, priding himself on having no religion, and doing his best to make others as irreligious as himself. With all this he had plenty of wit and a cultivated mind; he talked well, and suited his talk to his company; and when he chose could be polite and agreeable. He gained a footing among the *roués*, and his daring conversation gave so much pleasure that very soon he was one of the most constant and familiar guests at the suppers. I have already mentioned that the Duke of Orleans called the debauched companions of his evening amusements his *roués*, and the name had caught on so well that by this time nobody called them anything else. When he was sufficiently sure of the favour of the

Regent and the Duchess of Berry, who often joined the supper-parties, to aspire to higher things, he determined to become a man of importance and take part in public affairs.

With this object he concocted a scheme for putting an end to the peculation which goes on in connection with the movement of troops, their marching allowances, magazines, and so on. It was rather like the proposal of one of the *Fâcheux* in Molière's comedy, to turn the whole coast into a seaport; Broglio proposed to compel all the towns and villages along the usual route of troops to construct barracks at their own expense, and keep well-stored magazines always ready; this would, as he said, strike at the root of the rascalities committed by purveyors and contractors, gratify the soldiers, and relieve the public finances. He felt that to carry through such an absurd project he must get some one of influence to back him up, and, strange to say, he managed to convince Puységur that it was reasonable.

Puységur, a highly honourable man, had considerable experience of the cheating of army-contractors, and loathed it accordingly. The Duke of Orleans had the greatest respect and esteem for him, and had given him a leading place in the Council for War; so that, with his support, Broglio had no difficulty in persuading the Regent not only to adopt his plan, but to keep it secret from the Council for War till orders had been actually sent to the Intendants of Provinces to put it into execution. The result was that many towns and local authorities were put to heavy expense in building before the remonstrances which reached the Regent from all quarters induced him to desist from this ruinous folly, which did no good and much harm.

Another suggestion of Broglio's was to raise the soldiers' pay to its present level. He had no difficulty in persuading the Regent that it was necessary, owing to the general rise in prices since the rate of pay was fixed; and made him believe that such a boon would ensure him the devotion of the troops. But ever since the King's death the soldiers had been so tormented by the niggardly and cheeseparing economies of the Government that they were not in the least grateful for this increase of their pay; they considered it as their just due, only granted because it could no longer be withheld. It entailed, however, a very serious addition to the public expenditure. Louvois, in his time, had recognised that the pay of both officers and men was too small;

but he supplemented it by quartering the troops in rotation in districts where the men could earn money for themselves, and he gave the officers certain advantages in winter-quarters and in outlying stations. This system, which was admirably organised, remained in force under all his successors, till the appointment of the harsh and ignorant Voysin ; but he, in his zeal for retrenchment during the bad times at the close of the late reign, abolished it as an abuse and a fraud on the Treasury. It would have been wiser to recur to it now, instead of making a heavy and irrevocable increase to the annual expenditure ; a thing which I should have told the Regent, if he had consulted me, he had no right to do during a minority. However, he did it ; but he soon saw that he had made a mistake, and Broglio fell back into the ranks of the *roués*, whom he had hoped to leave far behind him. The Duke of Orleans never admitted him to his private room after this, nor allowed him to talk about public business.

Marshal de Villars was appointed to the Council of Regency at this time, without quitting the Council for War, merely to keep him quiet ; for he resented these changes being made without his knowledge, and was unsparing in his denunciation of the folly of the barrack-building scheme and the extravagant expenditure caused by the augmentation of pay. He was, moreover, secretly enrolled among those who meditated a serious attack on the Regent. A few days later the same favour was bestowed on Marshals d'Huxelles and d'Estrées, and also on d'Antin.

Cardinal de Polignac resolved about this time to be ordained priest, for hitherto his only Orders had been those of sub-deacon. I do not know whether he fancied that this intention, which he took care to publish, would give his protestations more weight ; but he demanded an audience of the Regent, to clear himself in regard to certain things of which he was suspected ; thinking that, with his cleverness and pleasant manners, he would have no difficulty with an easy-going Prince like the Duke of Orleans. He had been for a long time in the intimate confidence of Madame du Maine, and consequently of her husband ; their private rooms were open to him at all times ; and they did nothing without his counsel. His brother, an imbecile entirely under his influence, had just been released from the prison to which he had been sent for his share in the petition presented to the Parliament on behalf of the bastards, to which M. and

Madame du Maine and the Cardinal had certainly been privy. The full extent of the conspiracy which was on foot was not as yet perceived ; but enough was known to put the Regent on his guard against the Cardinal, who afterwards plunged deeper and deeper into the dangerous and criminal plots of M. and Madame du Maine.

Argenson, though now Keeper of the Seals and entrusted with the finances, had not shaken off the habits acquired while he was Lieutenant of Police, and kept very strange hours. He had been accustomed to do much of his business at night, and to be aroused at any hour ; he now made business appointments with the Treasury officials at one, two, or three o'clock in the morning, much to their disgust ; and, as he gave no dinners and held no regular audiences, people never knew when they could see him, which gave rise to a good deal of embarrassment. Though he always made a point of treating M. de la Rochefoucauld with particular respect, as the great man of his own province, he gave him an appointment at two o'clock in the morning. He invariably dined in his carriage on his way from his house to the Tuileries or Palais-Royal.

He had long been intimate with Madame de Veni, Prioress of the convent of the Madeleine in the Faubourg St. Antoine ; and, as he had rendered great services to that house, he was allowed to have rooms in the external buildings. When Lieutenant of Police he often used to sleep there, and he still did so as often as he could ; it happened more than once that he left the Seals there, and had to go back to fetch them. All this caused great loss of time ; and the difficulty of seeing him and getting a word with him gave rise to a good deal of grumbling. Had I foreseen that he would behave in this way I would have given him some advice before he assumed his new offices ; but it was now too late. All the work of the finances was transacted by him and Law ; they often worked with the Regent, but seldom both at once.

Poirier, First Physician to the King, died rather suddenly. The Duke of Orleans at once left the choice of his successor to the Duke of Maine and Marshal de Villeroy, telling them that he would have nothing to do with it, except that he barred two men : his own private physician, Chirac ; and Boudin, who had formerly been First Physician to Monseigneur. I had strongly advised him to take this

line; after all the infamous calumnies which had been promulgated against him at the time of the deaths in the Royal Family it would have been a delicate matter for him to interfere in the appointment of a First Physician. This was the cause of Chirac's exclusion; as for Boudin, I had only to remind the Regent of the abominable language he had used publicly at the time when France sustained the irreparable loss of the Dauphin. These exclusions caused the choice to fall on Dodart, a very honourable, straightforward man, of no great capacity or talent in his profession, who had formerly been Physician to the Children of France, and had held other court appointments.

Poirier had not had time since Fagon's death to take over the management of the botanical garden. One morning Chirac called upon me, which surprised me, for I do not think I had ever spoken to him; it was to ask me to procure for him the superintendence of this garden. He told me that he was very rich and did not want the appointment for the sake of its emoluments; on the contrary, he wanted to spend his own money on restoring the garden, for it had been very much neglected, and this collection of rare plants was fast going to ruin. He said a man holding the appointment of First Physician could not spare the time to look after the garden properly, whereas he took great interest in the subject, and would spare no pains to make the botanical garden what it ought to be, a credit to the country and useful to medical science. I asked him why, since he enjoyed the complete confidence of his master, he did not address himself directly to him. He satisfied me on this point, for he was a very clever talker.

I knew, as everybody did, that he was the most learned physician of his time, and that all the other doctors treated him with as much respect as if he had been a second Æsculapius; what I did not find out till afterwards was that, although extremely well off, he was devoured by avarice, that he was utterly dishonest and unprincipled, and of boundless effrontery. He felt that his master knew him; and that was why he applied to me, who knew nothing about him, for my interest. A day or two afterwards I spoke to the Duke of Orleans, who rather reluctantly gave him the appointment. Chirac never came near me again; but the worst of it was that, far from spending money on the gardens, he devastated them, taking all that

was most valuable for his own use ; so that when he died he left them like a fallow field, and they had to be remade from the very beginning.

Madame de Vendôme died on the 11th of April, from the excessive use of strong liquors, of which her cupboards were full ; she was in her forty-first year. All that can be said of her is that her death left one Princess of the Blood the less. She was very rich, for M. de Vendôme had made over all his property to her in the marriage settlement. In the two years of their married life the time they spent together could be reckoned by days, and very few of them. As there were no children, and her brother-in-law the Grand Prior was incapable of inheriting, her great wealth went to Madame la Princesse, her mother, and to her surviving brothers.

On the 27th of April the little bridge over the Seine caught fire. An imprudent person searching for something with a candle on board a barge loaded with hay set it on fire ; and, as the barge was moored alongside several others, it was hastily pushed off, and allowed to drift down stream. It struck a pile of the little bridge ; the flames which rose above it set fire to one of the houses on the bridge, and caused a serious conflagration. The hospital of the Hôtel-Dieu was in great danger ; Cardinal de Noailles spent a great part of the night in superintending the removal of the patients to the Archiepiscopal residence, where he attended to their comfort like a real pastor and father. The Duke de Guiche brought up the regiment of Guards, which rendered useful service. Marshal de Villars was rather laughed at ; he sent for cannon to knock down some houses ; as these were all of wood and closely massed together the remedy would have been quite as bad as the disease. The Capuchin and Franciscan friars made themselves very useful ; but the master of the pumps did not distinguish himself.

Madame de Castries, Lady-in-Waiting to the Duchess of Orleans, was found unconscious in her bed one morning, and died the same evening ; Madame de Saint-Simon had spent part of the previous evening with her, and she then seemed quite well. I have spoken elsewhere of her and her husband, who, with good reason, never got over her loss. She was all mind and soul, with hardly any body ; what she had was so delicate and diminutive that it seemed

as if a breath would blow her away ; she looked like a little half-finished doll. But, though she never paraded it, she was extremely learned ; and her wit, which was sometimes a little mischievous, was irrepressible ; she had all the odd, charming way of expressing herself peculiar to the Mortemart family.

Madame d'Espinoy was appointed Lady-in-Waiting in her place ; a footman of Madame de Castries exclaimed when he heard of it : " Ah ! my poor mistress ! what would she say if she knew who is her successor ! " It was the Duchess of Orleans who insisted on this appointment, because Madame d'Espinoy was M. d'O's daughter ; I have explained elsewhere how all the party of the bastards hung together. She tried to persuade people that it was the Regent's doing, but he denied it absolutely, and was the first to laugh at the choice of Madame d'Espinoy. The poor woman, however, did very well, and made herself popular with everybody.

The Queen of England died at St. Germain on the 7th of May, after an illness of ten or twelve days. Her life since her arrival in France in the end of 1688 had been nothing but a succession of misfortunes, borne with heroic constancy ; her time was entirely given up to prayer, penances, and good works. Though very warm-hearted, she had a good deal of wit and inborn pride, which she strove successfully to bring into subjection ; her manner was extremely majestic and dignified, yet gentle and modest. Out of the 600,000 livres which the King allowed her annually she spent hardly anything on herself ; she devoted it almost entirely to the poor English people who swarmed about St. Germain. Her body was consigned temporarily to the convent at Chaillot, which she used often to visit, where it still remains. The Court took no part in the obsequies ; only the Duke de Noailles was in attendance, as Governor of St. Germain, to see that everything was properly carried out. The court mourning lasted only three weeks.

CHAPTER IV

1718

A salutary lesson to Rome—Death of the Grand Equerry—The Chapter of Denain—I procure redress of their wrongs—Foreign affairs—The Quadruple Alliance—Spain invades Sicily—Destruction of the Spanish Fleet by Admiral Byng—Contraband salt-selling—Parliament and the currency—Their proclamation and its failure—Madame du Maine's intrigues.

For some time the Pope, acting under the influence of his Nuncio Bentivoglio and Cardinals Rohan and Bissy, had suspended the issue of his Bulls confirming ecclesiastical appointments; many dioceses were without Bishops, although in most cases they had been nominated, and many abbeys were also vacant. When he first came to this decision his advisers would have been glad enough to see the Bulls granted on conditions humiliating for France and for the Bishops, but favourable to Roman encroachments (for the extension of its authority is the constant aim of the Court of Rome); these conditions were that the nominated Bishops should write to the Pope in submissive terms, and that he should reject any nominee of whom they disapproved. The Regent would have been willing to accept a compromise; but Marshal d'Huxelles, who sometimes showed a proper spirit when these Roman matters were under consideration, remonstrated, and induced him to make a stand against the manœuvres of the cabal.

At last the Regent came to a decision of which the Court of Rome and its French allies had not thought him capable; one which, varied as the case requires, will always bring that Court to its senses. He announced to the Council of Regency that something must be done to overcome the obstinacy of the Court of Rome; and, since the Pope persisted in refusing the Bulls, contrary to the mutual understanding of the Concordat, means must be found for dispensing with his consent. With this object he proposed to

appoint a committee to inquire into the subject and report to the Council of Regency as soon as possible ; after which he would adopt the means recommended for proceeding to the consecration of all the nominated Bishops. This was received by the Council with general applause, the only dissentient being the Bishop of Troyes ; who, however, dared not openly oppose the Regent's motion, but signified his assent by bowing his head, though with a wry face. The Regent immediately nominated the committee, which was to consist of Marshal de Villeroy, d'Antin, Marshal d'Huxelles, Torcy, and myself as chairman ; and his selection was unanimously approved.

The subject was quite new to me, and I took pains to inform myself about it by consulting persons whom I thought capable of advising me. But I had not time to get up the question thoroughly, nor was there a single meeting of the committee. The Court of Rome took fright ; the Pope sent for Cardinal de la Trémouille, who had been forbidden by the Regent to accept his Bulls for Cambrai unless all the other nominated Bishops received theirs at the same time, and begged him to send off a courier to Paris with the announcement that all the Bulls would be issued immediately. This was received with great satisfaction, and it ought to have been a salutary lesson as to the proper way of dealing with Rome in similar cases. The Bulls were issued without delay, and for some time nothing was talked about but the consecration of various prelates ; there were three Archbishops and twelve or thirteen Bishops. So our committee came to an end before it had well begun, to our great satisfaction. I have always thought that the reports sent to Rome by Bentivoglio about the opinions of the members concerning the Constitution and Roman affairs generally made as much impression as the actual appointment of the committee, because they made it clear that the Regent was in earnest.

The Grand Equerry died about this time, in his seventy-seventh year. He was a remarkable instance of the bad taste of Louis XIV in the choice of his favourites ; and none among them ever received such distinguished and unvarying marks of that monarch's good-will as he did. A very handsome, very noble face ; admirable skill in dancing, in manly exercises, in gallantry, in all the fashionable pursuits of the day ; indefatigable assiduity at Court,

combined with perpetual flattery of the most servile and loathsome kind; the manners and magnificent habits of a great nobleman; a natural air of personal distinction which he never laid aside except in the presence of the Sovereign, before whom he used to cringe as if overpowered by his majestic splendour; such were the charms which won the King's heart, and enabled the favourite, during a period of forty years, to claim any distinction for himself or his family which he chose to ask for. Even the haughtiest Ministers, such as Seignelay, Louvois, and their successors, made a point of treating him with deference and anticipating his wishes; and he received their advances with polite superiority, as merely his due. The Princes of the Blood, and, more extraordinary still, the King's natural sons and daughters, found themselves compelled to show him the same respect; and he received them in his own house on a footing of equality. His gout, at first a pretext but afterwards a reality, served as an excuse for not leaving his own house, to which a great part of the Court was attracted by an excellent cook and the high play which went on all day; and this seclusion helped to keep up his assumption of superiority. He hardly ever went out, except when carried to the King's rooms, or to play cards in the saloon at Marly.

There never was a duller or more ignorant man, and that was another reason why the King liked him; yet he was well-informed in everything relating to the League and the history of his family; he was animated by all the spirit of the Guises, if he did not possess their ability. His long acquaintance with the Court and the very best society made up for his stupidity in ordinary life. He was extremely polite, but his politeness was not indiscriminate; he did not lavish it on everybody, but gave each person exactly what was his due; yet he was shrewd enough, by a mixture of haughtiness and familiarity, to win the affections of the principal valets of the royal household. At the same time he could be very rough in his manners to both men and ladies, especially at the card-table, where he sometimes made himself extremely unpleasant, using the most indecent expressions; but people were so used to his ways that nobody was angry; the ladies, even Princesses of the Blood, merely cast down their eyes, while the men laughed. Moreover, he was excessively greedy, and this

was another pretext for using the roughest language to men or ladies if they chanced to help themselves to a morsel which he coveted ; if asked out to dinner, or even if he had gone without an invitation, he expressed his displeasure plainly when the fare was not to his liking.

Besides this, he was so wrapped up in himself that he never cared for any of his relations, except in so far as the dignity of his family was concerned ; and when his wife and children died he neglected the ordinary decencies of society, did not wear proper mourning, played cards, and went about as usual. Yet at bottom he was a good-natured, honourable man, always ready to do a service, and in business matters extraordinarily noble and disinterested. I have recorded several anecdotes of him in these Memoirs : some to his credit, and some the reverse. He was little regretted. He had lived in the midst of the best society without making personal friends, and never took any interest in court matters, except when they concerned the dignity of his house, a point on which he was extremely sensitive. Nor did he ever pay any attention to his private affairs, which, however, were well looked after by Madame d'Armagnac ; after her death he left them entirely to his men of business. He had seen little service, except on the King's personal staff during a campaign. He very seldom slept anywhere except in the place where the King happened to be—another great merit in his eyes.

The Regent granted to the Duchess of Portsmouth an increase of her pension from 8,000 to 12,000 livres annually. She was very old, penitent, and devout : compelled by poverty to live in the country. It was just and polite to bear in mind the important services she had rendered to France while living in England, as the very influential mistress of Charles II.

Before turning to more serious affairs I cannot refrain from recording a trifling incident, because it is characteristic of the Duke of Orleans, and I forgot to set it down in its proper place. In the last year of the late King's reign the Chapter of Denain had deputed two of its Canonesses to represent the great damage which their house and property had sustained during the battle of Denain, the victory which first restored hope to France after a long series of disasters. I had often noticed them in attendance at the King's mass, and knew who they were and why they had come. Madame de

Dangeau took them under her protection ; but the King died before anything was done for them. After the establishment of the Regency, they addressed themselves to Marshals de Villeroy and Villars, and to the Duke de Noailles, because their business concerned both departments, those of War and Finance. For more than a year they went on knocking at various doors without success ; very often, as they told me afterwards, they were very rudely received and shown the door.

Weary of their long stay at Paris, so fruitless and so costly for persons in their reduced condition, yet unwilling to leave it so long as any means remained untried, they came at last to see me. Their names were Madame de Vignacourt and Madame d'Haudion. I received them with the politeness and respect due to persons of their birth and position, and listened to their case with the attention one ought to give to unfortunate petitioners. They seemed so much surprised at this reception that I could not help noticing it ; they told me afterwards that it was because they were totally unaccustomed to it. I was astonished that the Duke de Noailles in particular should have behaved so ungraciously towards them ; because, although his birth requires no enhancement, he prides himself on his relationship to the Vignacourt family, and draws attention to the full-length portraits of the two Grand Masters of Malta of that name. Their niece, François de Vignacourt, had been constrained by want of means to marry Antoine Boyer ; and her daughter Louise Boyer, a woman of singular virtue and merit, was the mother of the Cardinal and Marshal de Noailles. This was the only *mésalliance* the Noailles ever made, but it was a rather serious one.

To return to the Canonesses ; I inquired into their affair, and spoke about it to the Duke of Orleans. I told him that their demand was just, that the misfortunes had been caused by a victory which began the restoration of the tottering State ; that it was shameful to put them off so long, and not likely to add to the reputation of our country among foreigners. I reminded him of the pressing wants of these religious ladies, and especially of their two deputies, who were consuming all their scanty means during their prolonged stay in Paris. He listened kindly and attentively ; but six months went by before I could get any further.

I was the last hope of these two Canonesses : I did my

best to comfort them, and had got them into the way of coming to dine with me pretty often. They began to talk to me freely about their affairs; and one day they told me that they did not know what was to become of them, for they were on the point of being turned out of their lodgings. Next day I went purposely rather early to call on the Duchess of Orleans, whom I saw regularly once or twice a week, and nearly always found alone, though occasionally either Madame de Sforza or the Count de Toulouse was with her. As I hoped, I found her on this occasion alone with the Duke of Orleans. They were sitting in the garden; I sat down with them, and we had a rather long conversation. As I rose to take my leave I asked the Duke of Orleans to give me a couple of crowns. His astonishment at this request was heightened by the grave manner in which it was made; he wanted to know the meaning of the joke, and I kept on telling him that it was no joke at all; that I asked him in all seriousness to give me a few livres, which I thought he would not refuse me.

At last I told him about the two Canonesses and the straits to which they were reduced; I said they would not take money from me, but from him they would not refuse it; and I wanted these two crowns to give them as coming from him, so that they might at any rate procure some sort of a dinner for a few days. They both laughed, and I pointed out how wrong it was that these two ladies should be reduced to such extremities merely because no one would take the trouble to inquire into their case. I departed with a much more satisfactory assurance from the Duke of Orleans than I had ever received before; by the end of the month the request of the Chapter was granted in full, with a sum of money sufficient to enable the two Canonesses to pay their debts in Paris and return home, and I took care that they received it. They were extremely delighted and grateful; I told them about the sarcastic request for two crowns, which had at last brought their business to a conclusion; and they laughed heartily at the story. I received the warmest thanks from the Abbess and Chapter; and so long as the two Canonesses lived I never failed to hear from them once a year. I must now turn to more serious matters.

Foreign affairs require some notice. Public attention throughout Europe was directed to the restoration of peace between Spain and the Empire, which had been broken by

the Spanish invasion of Sardinia in the previous year; and negotiations with this object were carried on in London, Penterieder acting for the Emperor, and France being represented by the Abbé Dubois. Monteleone, the Spanish Ambassador in London, a man of great ability and experience, thought a peaceful policy the best for Spain; but he was afraid to speak his mind openly because he knew that Alberoni was of a different opinion, and saw that he would only ruin himself to no purpose if he opposed the wishes, and possibly the private interests, of that all-powerful Minister.

The points on which the Spanish Government insisted were that the Emperor should finally renounce his claims to any part of the Spanish monarchy actually in the possession of Philip V, for he still continued to style himself King of Spain, and had given his eldest son the title of Prince of the Asturias; and, secondly, that in the event of the Houses of Medici and Farnese becoming extinct, as seemed probable, the succession to the Grand-Duchy of Tuscany and the Duchy of Parma should be guaranteed to the eldest son of the present Queen of Spain, who was the rightful heiress of both families. The Emperor raised no objection so far as Parma was concerned, for that duchy, from its inland situation, could not receive assistance from abroad; but to allow Tuscany, with the port of Leghorn, to fall into the hands of a Spanish Prince sprung from the Royal Family of France, would be to leave a door open for French and Spanish armies whenever those nations chose to combine to expel him from his Italian dominions. The Regent at first supported the demands of Spain; but, fearing lest they should give rise to a general war, he consented to enter into a quadruple alliance between France, England, Holland, and the Empire, with the object of preserving the peace of Europe.

Alberoni, however, was bent on war, and would listen to none of the compromises suggested. He boasted openly that Spain was not afraid of war; under his administration a powerful, well-equipped navy had come into existence; there were already 17,000 excellent troops in Sardinia; over 30,000 more were ready to embark, amply supplied with stores of all kinds; and the war-chest contained 1,500,000 crowns. He could not bring himself to believe that either England or France would interfere to prevent his designs on Italy. The King of England was, indeed, bound by treaty to defend the integrity of the Imperial dominions

in Italy ; and a powerful squadron was being fitted out in the English ports ; but Alberoni had convinced himself that the position of the House of Hanover was so precarious that the British Government would not risk a war. He was confirmed in this belief by many considerations. The violence of the Opposition in Parliament misled him into thinking the disaffected party in England much stronger than it really was. The Czar of Russia, who was much incensed against the King of England, had openly declared his sympathy with the Pretender, and his readiness to assist him in landing a force in Scotland. Cellamare, the Spanish Ambassador at Paris, informed Alberoni that he had had repeated interviews with the Duke of Ormond, who was living near Paris in disguise, and had received from him most satisfactory assurances as to the strength of the Pretender's party in England ; he had also seen an Englishman named Cammock, formerly an Admiral in the British service, who assured him that he had an understanding with the Captains of seven or eight ships forming part of the British squadron, and that if it entered the Mediterranean he would be able to bring them over, with their ships and crews, to the side of Spain.

Cellamare assured Alberoni that he had nothing to fear on the side of France, for though the Regent and his advisers, for their own private reasons, favoured the alliance with England, such was by no means the case with the nation generally. The public, he said, looked upon the powerful armaments of Spain with equal astonishment and delight, and wishes were generally expressed for its success ; the Regent's authority was tottering ; an open quarrel was imminent between him and the Parliament of Paris, and discontent was rife throughout the kingdom. In fact Cellamare, as was afterwards clearly proved, was himself deep in the plots of the cabal which was seeking to overthrow the Regent, and had no doubt of their success. In such of his despatches as could not be sent by a sure private hand, for he doubted the safety even of those sent by his own couriers, he used to communicate the progress of these plots to Alberoni in figurative language. The vintage, he said, was not yet fully ripe, and he would not gather the grapes prematurely ; but already some ripe clusters were being sold publicly, to alleviate the thirst of those who were to make the wine.

In the meantime he felt sure that in the present state of French opinion the Regent was quite as unwilling as the King of England to provoke an open rupture with Spain. A journey which Stanhope, the English Secretary of State, made to Madrid was considered by the Spanish Court to be a proof of the anxiety of the English Ministers to avoid a war which the nation would strongly disapprove. These fears, however, made little impression on the mind of the Regent, and none at all on that of King George, who cared little for the disapproval of Spain provided he could come to a satisfactory agreement with the Emperor. Some difficulties had arisen with regard to the treaty for the Quadruple Alliance, but these were smoothed over ; and a convention was signed between France and England binding both Powers to resist any further alterations in the treaty, and to sign it as it stood the moment the Emperor's Minister in London received corresponding orders from his master. It was to this convention that Marshal d'Huxelles refused his signature ; which he afterwards appended when the Regent gave him his choice between doing so or resigning his office.

In the meantime a most formidable armament had been prepared in the Spanish ports, consisting of twenty-two ships of the line, with transports sufficient for 35,000 soldiers, 100 pieces of heavy artillery, and an immense quantity of stores of all kinds. It sailed early in June, and by the middle of June arrived at Cagliari, in Sardinia. Its ultimate destination was a mystery. In Italy it was generally supposed that there was a secret understanding between the King of Sicily (better known as the Duke of Savoy) and the King of Spain, and that the Spanish troops would be landed in the north of Italy, for the invasion of Lombardy ; but the more common opinion in Europe was that the blow was to fall on Naples ; and it was calculated that the landing could not take place before the 20th of July. The expedition was, however, in reality intended for Sicily ; but the secret was so well kept that the Duke of Savoy was completely taken by surprise. Even so late as the 11th of July his Minister at Madrid wrote that in spite of the secrecy observed by the Spanish Ministers he had discovered that the expedition would land at St. Pierre d'Arena, in the Gulf of Genoa. At that time Palermo had been for more than a week in the possession of the Spaniards. They landed on the 1st of

July, and captured the town and citadel of Palermo without much difficulty; they then marched to Messina, and laid siege to the citadel; which was garrisoned by 2,500 Piedmontese, and offered a stubborn resistance.

By this time the British squadron of twenty ships of the line had arrived in the Mediterranean under Admiral Byng, whose orders were to resist by force any invasion of the Emperor's dominions in Italy, and, in case the Spanish attack was directed upon Sicily, to do all in his power to hinder and obstruct it. He proceeded in the first place to Naples, where he arranged with Count Daun, the Imperialist Viceroy, to transport 2,000 German troops to reinforce the garrison of Messina. Finding that the Spanish fleet was disposed to resist him, he landed the troops at Reggio, and prepared to attack the Spaniards. He came in contact with them off Cape Passaro on the 10th of August, and after a hotly contested action practically destroyed their fleet. Six or seven Spanish ships under Mari had been separated from the main body when the battle began; Byng sent a detachment in pursuit of them, and next day they were all captured or sunk.

Stanhope was still at Madrid, hoping to come to some peaceable arrangement, but on the receipt of this news he at once took leave of the King and Queen, and returned to England through France. He arrived at Paris on the 26th of August, where he learnt that the Quadruple Alliance between France, England, Holland, and the Emperor had been signed four days previously.

The Regent was by no means displeased by the news of the destruction of the Spanish fleet; on the contrary, the union between him and the King of England was by this time so firmly cemented that they considered themselves as engaged in a common cause. Stair, the English Ambassador, congratulated his master on the weakness of the party opposed to the Regent; who, he said, would be now relieved from the domestic dangers which surrounded him, so that his friends abroad might safely rely on him. Perhaps these were not his real sentiments; perhaps, on the contrary, he would not have been sorry to see France weakened by intestine divisions; if so, he was doomed to disappointment.

The Spanish Ambassador gave out that the spirit of peace prevailed in France and that of sedition had vanished; those who appreciated the blessings of tranquillity only

hoped that God would inspire the Regent and his counsellors with wisdom to perceive the advantages to be derived from a good understanding between France and Spain. This was what he said; but his actions belied his words. He was still bent on carrying out the secret instructions he had received from his Court; he assured Alberoni that he was looking after his workmen, as he called them, and would show them what they had to do and how to do it. In the meanwhile, he said, he was keeping them in good spirits and ready to serve cheerfully; he kept all the materials furnished by the Cardinal in his own hands, and would use them only when the suitable moment arrived. If it became necessary to send new models, he would not do so by the ordinary channels because they were evidently dangerous.

Complaints had been made for some time of the prevalence of contraband salt-selling in various parts of the kingdom; all measures to stop it seemed ineffective, and the smugglers went about openly in armed bands. A veritable battle took place in the forest of Chantilly between them and a detachment of Swiss and archers, who had been sent to intercept their march; the smugglers were beaten, and their salt confiscated; they lost many prisoners, who were hanged; but the Swiss and archers also had a good many killed and wounded. The numbers of the smugglers increased in spite of the numerous executions, which only caused them to put themselves under stricter discipline; and, as they never did harm to any private persons, they were generally popular and always received notice of any movement against them. It was more than suspected that they were sustained and encouraged by persons in high places, in order that they might serve as troops in case of need. The county of Eu [1] swarmed with them, and sent out a good many to other parts of the kingdom.

The Parliament, relying on the support of M. and Madame du Maine, was determined to give the Regent as much trouble as possible, hoping to increase its own power at the expense of his authority. Like all persons who for their own private interests wish to throw the State into confusion, its leaders assumed the rôle of fathers and protectors of the people. With this object Trudaine, Provost of the Merchants, was ordered to lay before the Parliament

[1] The county of Eu formed part of M. du Maine's government.

the accounts of the Hôtel-de-Ville stock, though he declared that the interest had never been so regularly paid, and that there was not the slightest cause for complaint. The Parliament then proceeded to find fault with an edict lately promulgated concerning the currency, which they declared to be very prejudicial to the kingdom, and appointed commissioners to inquire into the question. The six mercantile guilds and six leading bankers were ordered to report on the manner in which their interest and trade in general were affected by the edict, and duly appeared before the Grand Chamber ; the merchants asked for more time to draw up a report ; the six bankers, however, who had been specially picked out because their opinions were well known beforehand, had theirs all ready.

Finally, on the 17th of June, the Parliament sent a deputation to the Regent, demanding that the edict should be suspended for the present, that such changes should be introduced into it as they thought fit, and that it should be then sent to them for registration. Two of the courts, the Cour des Aides and the Chambre des Comptes, refused to join in this demand, to the great displeasure of their colleagues, who were also very angry because the mercantile guilds declined to report unfavourably of the edict, leaving the Parliament with nothing to rely on except the report of the six bankers, who complained dutifully in the terms prescribed to them. Next day the Parliament assembled again and sent word to the Regent by the law-officers of the Crown that it would not separate till it had received his reply. This was to the effect that His Royal Highness was weary of the petty difficulties which the Parliament was always raising ; that the King must be obeyed, and that, to ensure obedience, he had sent orders to the household troops quartered in Paris and its environs to hold themselves in readiness to march.

Next morning the First-President went to the Palais-Royal, accompanied by all the *Présidents-à-mortier* and several counsellors. He was at the beck and call of M. and Madame du Maine, and the prime mover in all the opposition ; nevertheless, he wanted to fish in troubled waters, to keep on good terms with the Regent, in order to get money out of him, and at the same time to maintain his influence over his colleagues. Accordingly he began his harangue with many flattering compliments, intended to

smooth the way for the three audacious demands which followed: namely, that the edict about the currency should be referred to the Parliament for amendment, and subsequently registered; that the King should pay some respect to the remonstrances of the Parliament in an affair of such importance and so prejudicial to the public welfare; and lastly, that all work at the Mint in connection with the new coinage should be suspended. The Regent replied that registration was unnecessary, but out of deference to the wishes of his advisers (he might have said foolish and dangerous deference to such treacherous advisers as Marshals Huxelles and Besons, Canillac, d'Effiat, and Noailles), he had caused it to be registered by the *Cour des Monnaies*, a superior court with full power to do so; as to the second, that the edict had been well considered, and full weight given to all objections; as for the third, the issue of the new coinage would be continued at the Mint, and the King must be obeyed.

On the following day the Parliament met again, and issued a proclamation against the edict. The Council of Regency assembled in the afternoon, and declared this proclamation null and void; it was forbidden to print or publish it; and soldiers were sent to the markets to see that the new money passed without difficulty. The Parliament had a specious pretext for playing the part of protectors of the public, for the fact is that, although the Treasury gained by debasing the currency and forcing people to take bank-notes, private individuals were losers by it, because the price of everything rose. The Parliament, moreover, would not have been sorry to deprive the Treasury of this last resource, and it made good use of its opportunities. A counsellor, named La Ville-aux-clercs, was caught in the act of riding about the streets at night, defacing the placards which announced the decree of the Council of Regency annulling the proclamation of the Parliament against the edict, and he was sent to prison.

On Sunday the 26th of June the six mercantile guilds came to the Regent and made a declaration to the effect that they had no complaint to make against the edict; only they begged him, if he thought proper to diminish the amount of coin in circulation, to do it gradually. Next day the First-President, accompanied by all the *Présidents-à-mortier* and about forty counsellors, went to the Tuileries,

and in the presence of the Regent read to the King a bombastic remonstrance. The Keeper of the Seals replied that the King would give them an answer in a few days.

A Council of Regency had been held that morning; and after dinner we were again summoned to deliberate on this question. I took little part in these debates. I knew the Duke of Orleans thought me biased by my hatred of the Parliament since the affair of the cap; I was vexed at his neglect of his own interests and the King's authority in all these disputes; and I told him, once for all, that I would never open my mouth to him on the subject. I kept my word exactly; and in the Council I contented myself with saying just what was necessary in giving my vote, in the most laconic terms; not altogether sorry, I must confess, to see the Regent at loggerheads with the Parliament.

On Saturday, the 2nd of July, the same deputation of the Parliament came to the Tuileries to hear the King's reply, which was delivered by the Keeper of the Seals, in the presence of the King, the Regent, all the Princes of the Blood, and the bastards, being also present. Argenson, who, when Lieutenant of Police, had often been roughly handled by this body, now made it feel his superiority; he reminded the deputation that the authority which the Sovereign had delegated to it extended only to the hearing of lawsuits between private persons, but gave it no right to interfere in matters of State. He wound up by telling them that the edict about the currency would be put in force without any change whatever. The gentlemen had not expected so firm a reply, and went away extremely mortified.

On the 11th and 12th of August the Parliament again assembled and exhaled their venom in the celebrated proclamation which runs as follows: "The Court ordains that the bank shall not go beyond the limits prescribed in the letters-patent of the 2nd and 20th of May, 1716; consequently, it is forbidden, directly or indirectly, to receive or keep any of the public moneys, or to employ such money in the operations of the bank or for the profit of its managers. The Court further ordains that the whole of the public revenues shall be paid directly to the responsible officials, to be employed by them in their several departments, and each official shall be held personally responsible for all revenue received through the bank. Moreover, the

Court ordains that no foreigner, even if naturalised, shall meddle, directly or indirectly, either in his own name or under cover of others, in the handling and management of the public revenue, under the penalties prescribed by ordinances which have been duly registered in this Court."

The sensation caused by this ordinance may be imagined. It was nothing more nor less than arrogating to the Parliament the whole management of the finances, making all the officials appointed by the Regent, and even the Regent himself, responsible to that body; personally interdicting Law and placing him at the discretion of the Parliament, which would certainly not have been exercised with undue moderation. After such a preliminary there was but a step to making the Parliament in reality what it absurdly claimed to be, guardian and master of the kingdom; the Regent being even more under its guardianship than the King, and perhaps in as great danger as Charles I of England. The gentlemen of the Parliament were going to work quite as energetically as did the English Parliament at the beginning of the trouble; and though they were in reality nothing but a Court of Justice, on the same footing as other courts in the kingdom, they had, by boasting and playing on a word, actually brought themselves to believe that they were in the same position as the Parliament of England, a legislative Assembly, elected by the whole nation.

While all this ferment was at its height Madame du Maine had the audacity to visit the Regent, and complain in a very high tone that she heard he was making serious imputations against her. What came to light very soon afterwards showed how much value was to be attached to her disculpation, which her dangerous but timid husband did not venture to make in person. They were both furious at the decision of the first Council of Regency, which deprived them of the right of succeeding to the Crown; and the wife's dream ever since had been to carry out the threat she made at Sceaux to the Dukes de la Force and d'Aumont, that "sooner than surrender such a prerogative she would set the kingdom in a blaze from one end to the other." The modifications in their favour made by the Duke of Orleans on his own authority were taken by them as so many proofs of weakness and timidity, and made them all the more determined to push matters to extremity.

Everything seemed favourable for their projects. A part of the nobility had been seduced; Brittany and the Parliament of Paris were in open opposition to the Regent; in Spain, Alberoni was at their disposal; there was general discontent with the Quadruple Alliance and with the administration of the finances; and Marshal de Villeroy's malignant parade of silly precautions concerning the King's food and linen had given rise to a renewal of the infamous calumnies against the Duke of Orleans. All that was necessary now was to lull him into security till the moment for action had fully come; and it was in the administration of the deadly opiate that Madame du Maine employed her sex, cleverness, eloquence, and audacity on this occasion. She left the Regent's room fully satisfied with the effect she thought she had produced, and he was still more content that she should remain under that impression. I must now relate how the Regent managed to regain control of the horses which had so thoroughly taken the bit between their teeth; the details of the story are interesting.

I may as well mention, however, that the Duke of Orleans at last consented to his daughter becoming a nun, and towards the end of August Cardinal de Noailles received her vows at the convent of Chelles. Neither Madame nor the Duchess of Orleans was present, nor any Prince or Princess of the Blood. The Duchess of Orleans went for some time to St. Cloud, where Madame spent six months every summer.

CHAPTER V

1718

Rumours of a proposed *lit-de-justice*—Memoirs of Cardinal de Retz, Joly, and Madame de Motteville—Hopes of a new Fronde—The Parliament plot to kill Law—I propose that the *lit-de-justice* be held at the Tuileries—The Duke of Orleans discusses his plans with me and preparations for the *lit-de-justice* are made—I interview Fontanieu—I call on the Duke de Bourbon—Our interview—We discuss M. du Maine—The King's education—The Comte de Charolais—The Regent's possible successor—We part on excellent terms.

Towards the end of August a rumour began to spread that a *lit-de-justice* would shortly be held; not that the Regent had thought of such a thing as yet, but it was obviously the only means of checking the repeated encroachments of the Parliament on the royal authority; and some hoped, others feared, that he would be compelled to adopt it. On the whole, however, the factious party were reassured by the weakness and timidity shown by the Regent throughout the hostile movement in Paris and Brittany; they thought that, having allowed intrigues and sedition to rise to such a height, he would never venture on such a bold and vigorous step as holding a *lit-de-justice*.

At this time all heads were turned by reading the memoirs of Cardinal de Retz, Joly, and Madame de Motteville, which had become so much the fashion that men and women of all classes had them continually in their hands; a vague desire for novelty and the hope of playing a prominent part led many of them to hope for a repetition of the events of the last minority, and the persons destined to figure in them were already pointed out. A new Cardinal Mazarin was discovered in Law, a foreigner like him; the Fronde in the cabal formed by the Duke and Duchess of Maine; the weakness of the Duke of Orleans seemed to match that of the Queen-mother; Marshal de Villeroy gave himself out as a new Duke de Beaufort, with the additional advantage

of an office about the King's person, and the confidence of the Parliament ; which body was itself expected to play the same part as it did during the minority of Louis XIV. Several persons were marked for the part of Broussel, and this modern Fronde was sure of a First-President entirely at its service. The fact that we were at peace with foreign Powers, which was not the case during the last minority, was an additional incentive to people who hoped to set up against the Regent the King of Spain, personally hostile to him for many reasons, and strong in the claims of his birthright. The intrigues of the League against Henry III were not forgotten ; the Duke du Maine, with the exception of personal courage, had all the qualities of the Duke de Guise, and his wife those of Madame de Montpensier. In short, matters were evidently approaching a crisis, and it was high time for the Regent to shake off his lethargy, which drove his friends to despair, and had already brought the kingdom which he governed to the verge of the most serious troubles.

The Abbé Dubois returned from England about this time, and was by no means pleased at the diminution of his master's credit, for his own fortune entirely depended upon him. He consulted Law, who was himself terrified lest he should fall into the clutches of the Parliament, and be abandoned to its tender mercies. The Keeper of the Seals, who had incurred the hatred of the Parliament while at the head of the police, and was now afraid of losing his office, was also taken into consultation. These three men formed an alliance, which Law induced M. le Duc to join ; for he was personally interested in Law's system, and moreover proposed to take advantage of this crisis to gratify his hatred of M. du Maine by overthrowing him and taking his place about the King's person. This little group, actuated by different motives, but all bent on the same object, made a great impression on the Regent ; they opened his eyes to his danger, pointed out the only remedy, and convinced him that he must try it without delay ; in short, he formed a resolution so promptly that no one had the slightest suspicion of it.

I was myself in complete ignorance when, as I was transacting business with the Duke of Orleans, as I usually did in the afternoon, he surprised me by suddenly changing the subject and speaking with great bitterness of the Parliament

and its encroachments. I replied coldly and negligently, as I always did on this subject, and turned again to the business we had been discussing. He stopped me at once, and said he saw very well that I would not talk to him about the Parliament. I said that was quite true, as he must have perceived long ago. He pressed me so urgently to speak that at last I reminded him of the advice I had given him repeatedly both before and after he became Regent. He had preferred, I said, to listen to other counsellors, possibly treacherous, certainly interested; and had made up his mind that the affair of the cap and all that followed had so biased my mind that I could not think calmly where the Parliament or the bastards were concerned. I had therefore kept complete silence on such matters, and it was painful to me to break it now; nevertheless, I must tell him that I saw the fulfilment of my prophecy rapidly approaching. At one time he could have kept the Parliament in order by a simple frown; but his timid good-nature had encouraged it to presume more and more, till now he had to choose between submitting to be stripped of all the authority of a Regent—possibly to be called to account for the manner in which he had used it—or to have recourse to violent measures which would certainly be dangerous, and might very possibly fail. One thing, I continued, I must impress upon him: if he decided to assert his authority, let him first examine himself, and make very sure that he had resolution enough to carry the business through, for to begin a thing of that sort and then let it drop would be a far worse mistake than any into which his weakness had already led him; it would expose him to universal contempt, and bring him to utter ruin.

It was long since he had heard such plain language from me; and this reply, delivered slowly and calmly, as though I were quite indifferent what course he took, let him see how little capable I thought him of resolute action, or of persevering with it to the end. It stung him; and, as it came on the top of the impression which Dubois, Law, and Argenson (though I did not know it till afterwards) had already produced, it had a marvellous effect.

At this time the proclamation by the Parliament, which I have transcribed, had not yet been published; but its purport had transpired. It also became known that the Parliament had appointed commissioners to take proceed-

ings against Law, and that several witnesses had already been examined secretly; that arrangements had in fact been made to send ushers to Law with a warrant for his arrest, and to have him hanged immediately within the precincts of the law-courts. On hearing this news the Duke de la Force and Fagon, *Conseiller d'État*, whom I have had occasion to mention several times, went to the Regent, and urged him so strongly to take action that he ordered them to take Law with them to my house, to confer with me as to what had better be done. They came accordingly, and this was the first intimation I had that the Duke of Orleans began to realise his situation and had decided to take some action.

Law had hitherto shown great firmness, but at our conference he broke down so far as to shed tears. The most urgent point was to assure his personal safety. He had provided himself with a safe-conduct from the Regent, but that would not stop the Parliament for an instant; once arrested, his fate would be sealed before the conciliatory negotiations which the Regent would no doubt adopt in the first instance had given place to stronger methods; certainly long before he made up his mind to send the regiment of Guards to break open the doors of the palace. That indeed would be a critical measure; even if successful it would shock public opinion; it would be horrible if, instead of Law, they found nothing but his corpse dangling from a rope. My advice was that Law should retire at once to the Palais-Royal, to rooms belonging to Nancré, a friend of his, who was in Spain at the time. This suggestion revived his courage, and he put it into execution directly he left my house. He could have been made equally safe if he had taken up his quarters at the Bank; but I thought his taking refuge at the Palais-Royal would produce a greater effect, and would commit the Regent more deeply; besides, his presence there would be useful, as he could see the Regent at any hour.

That point settled, I proposed that a *lit-de-justice* should be held, to which the others assented cordially, as the only means of obtaining the registration of the Regent's order cancelling the edicts of the Parliament. While we were discussing the question, however, a reflection occurred to me which pulled us up short; it struck me that M. du Maine and Marshal de Villeroy would be strongly opposed to a

lit-de-justice so contrary to all their schemes ; that to prevent it they would plead the heat of the weather, which was indeed intense, and make an appeal on behalf of the King's health which would greatly embarrass the Regent ; if he still persisted in holding it they might very likely declare that they washed their hands of the consequences to the King and would decline to accompany him. As they would have ample time to work on the King's mind he would very probably refuse to go without them ; in that case the whole project would fall to the ground, and such a manifestation of the Regent's impotence might have rapid and dangerous consequences. Besides, these two men, following up the ostentatious precautions they had recently adopted to guard the King against poison, would no doubt go about hinting that to hold a *lit-de-justice* at such an unhealthy season was an easy method for the Regent to try, which might save him further trouble. These considerations brought us to a standstill ; but a way out of the difficulty suggested itself to me, which was to hold the *lit-de-justice* at the Tuileries. By adopting this expedient there would be no necessity to let any one know about it till the morning of the very day it was to be held ; our opponents would be taken off their guard ; there could be no pretence of the King's health being endangered ; and the armed force which might possibly be required would be more easily available, and more dreaded, if it never left the King's residence, than it would be at the Palace.

We decided, therefore, to take this course ; and as soon as Law had left us I dictated to Fagon a summary of the steps I thought necessary to carry out our design with the required secrecy. By about nine o'clock in the evening it was finished, and I advised Fagon to show it to the Abbé Dubois, for, considering his present relations with the Regent, we could not hope to dispense with his assistance, and he might be of use in helping his master to make up his mind. Such was the conference of Friday, the 19th of August ; the day on which I first heard that the Regent was seriously alarmed and determined to make an effort to escape from the clutches of the cabal and Parliament.

Next morning the Duke of Orleans sent me an order to be in attendance at the Palais-Royal at four that afternoon. I went accordingly ; shortly afterwards La Vrillière came in, and delivered me from the company of Gruncey and Broglio,

two *roués*, whom I had found lounging familiarly in the large antechamber, cooling themselves with their wigs off. Very soon we were requested to go into the new gallery, painted by Coypel, where we found Hasfeld explaining to the Regent and Marshal de Villeroy a quantity of maps and plans of the Pyrenees. The Duke of Orleans received me with affectionate caresses, which showed that he had need of me ; he whispered that he had much to say to me before the meeting, but he must first get rid of the Marshal. This was the first I had heard of any meeting ; I did not know who was to be there ; La Vrillière, however, asked me whether I had come to see the Regent on business, as he had been summoned for four o'clock. "So have I," I replied.

The Marshal afterwards drew me aside and began chattering, with a sort of dull malignity, about the precautions he had lately taken for the King's safety, and about the anonymous letters of warning which, he said, were showered upon him ; though I daresay they were really written by M. du Maine and himself. At last he took his departure, with the rest of the visitors ; then the Duke of Orleans breathed freely, and led me into one of the little rooms behind the great saloon which looks on to the Rue de Richelieu.

As we entered he took me by the arm, saying he was at the crisis of his Regency, and his whole future was at stake. I said, I saw it only too clearly, and that he must rely entirely on his own resolution. We had hardly sat down when the Abbé Dubois came in, and began talking rather enigmatically about the Parliament ; but the Regent did not receive him very cordially, and got rid of him as soon as possible, giving orders at the same time that he was not to be disturbed, except that he wished to know when the Keeper of the Seals arrived ; he then bolted the door. I then told him that Fagon had seen Dubois that morning, and had been alarmed to hear him talk in a hesitating way about the Parliament, and rather hostilely about the Keeper of the Seals, who had previously been a great ally of his. The Regent said he had noticed the same thing himself, and, though he was sure Dubois would not betray him, we must proceed very warily. After this brief preamble he told me that he had made up his mind to strike a blow at the Parliament by means of a *lit-de-justice*, and approved of our suggestion that it should be held at the Tuileries ; that he had made sure of M. le Duc by giving him a fresh pension of 150,000 livres as chief of

the Council of Regency, and had also received that morning a formal promise of support from the Prince of Conti; that M. le Duc wished to deprive M. du Maine of the superintendence of the King's education, because it was important to himself, now that the King was advancing in age and understanding, to remove an enemy from about his person; he therefore wished the *lit-de-justice* to be held, if possible, on the following Tuesday, and to take advantage of it to deprive M. du Maine of his office.

Here I interrupted him, and told him plainly that I advised him not to do so. "And pray, why not?" he asked. "Because," I replied, "you had better not attempt too much at once. The really urgent affair, which can bear no delay, is that of the Parliament; be content with that. If you strike a determined blow in that quarter, and know how to follow it up, you will regain all your authority at once; you will have plenty of time to deal with M. du Maine afterwards. Do not identify his cause with theirs; if you strike at both together he will pose as the champion and martyr of the Parliament; or rather, such is the colouring they have contrived to give their pretensions—of the interests of the public. Wait and see what effect is produced on the public mind by your sudden attack on the Parliament. You would not strike down M. du Maine at the right time, when the Parliament and the public not only expected, but wished you to do so; you gave him leisure and opportunity to practise his wiles upon them; and now you want to remove him from his office just at the wrong moment. There is another consideration: does M. le Duc desire this office for himself, or would he be content with the removal of M. du Maine?" "He does not care about it himself," replied the Regent. "So far, so good," I said; "but try to get him to listen to reason, and not lead you into attempting too much at this particular crisis. Consider, Sir," I added, "that in opposing the downfall of M. du Maine I am acting in opposition to my own dearest interests; you know how acutely I resent the superiority of rank which has been conferred upon him; you know how bitterly I hate him personally since his black-hearted treachery in the affair of the cap and all that followed it; but the good of the country and your advantage are dearer to me than my rank and my revenge, and I implore you to consider carefully before you decide."

The Regent was more struck perhaps by my self-control than by my arguments ; he gave in at once, embraced me, and said that now I spoke as a friend and not as a Duke and Peer. I could not refrain from reproaching him slightly for his unjust suspicions of me where this point was concerned. It was then agreed between us that M. du Maine should be spared for a less dangerous opportunity. The Regent told me that he had resolved to adopt the course laid down in the minute which I dictated to Fagon, in preference to an alternative scheme proposed by the Abbé Dubois, who wished to postpone the *lit-de-justice* till after Martinmas. He then asked me to take charge of the mechanical arrangements for the ceremony, employing Fontanieu, Keeper of the Royal Wardrobe, with injunctions to keep them absolutely secret, especially from the Duke d'Aumont, who, as First Gentleman of the Chamber on duty, was Fontanieu's chief ; for he was well known to be completely subservient to M. du Maine and the First-President.

The Keeper of the Seals had been announced some time ago, and the Regent now opened the door into the next room, where he was waiting with La Vrillière and the Abbé Dubois, and called them into the room where he usually transacted business in the summer. We sat down at a large table, and the Keeper of the Seals read the draft of the proclamations to be ratified at the *lit-de-justice*, cancelling the edicts of the Parliament, etc. ; which was approved with a few trifling alterations. The Abbé Dubois, however, disapproved of everything ; so much so that he seemed to be animated by the parliamentarian spirit of the Chancellor. We all disputed with him, and at last he became embarrassed, but without giving up his singular opposition.

Just as the reading of the draft was concluded M. le Duc was announced, whereupon the Duke of Orleans put on his wig and went out to meet him in the antechamber. During his absence we took a few turns up and down the gallery, Dubois still keeping up his arguments against Argenson, La Vrillière, and myself. In a few minutes I heard the door of the room where we had been consulting open ; I went in in front of the others, and saw the Regent bringing in M. le Duc ; I advanced towards them, and, as I was in the secret of the good understanding between

them, I asked the Duke of Orleans, with a smile, why he brought in M. le Duc to disturb our consultations. "You see him here," he replied, taking M. le Duc by the arm, "and I hope you will often see him here again!" Looking at them both I expressed my joy at the union between them, adding that their true interest lay in that, and not in uniting themselves with the bastards. "Oh!" said the Regent, putting his hands on my shoulders, "as for this man, you can talk freely before him; there is no one in the world who is more anxious to see an alliance between the legitimate Princes, or who hates the bastards more cordially!" I laughed, and confirmed this assertion emphatically; M. le Duc said some civil things to me, and expressed his respect for the Regent.

We then resumed our places at the table, M. le Duc sitting between the Regent and myself. His Royal Highness requested the Keeper of the Seals to read his draft again, so that M. le Duc might hear it. It passed off this time with hardly any interruption, M. le Duc made some comments on it to me in a low voice, and when the reading was finished declared himself perfectly satisfied. The Duke of Orleans then rose and took M. le Duc to the far end of the room; after a minute or two he called me to them, and said they were about to discuss the programme. The most urgent business was the preparation of the hall for the *lit-de-justice*; he begged me, therefore, to see Fontanieu about it at once.

As I was getting into my carriage a servant of Law's, who had been lying in wait for me, came up and said his master begged me to go to his room, which was close by. There I found Law and his wife, who went out immediately; I told her that all was going well, and that M. le Duc was with the Regent; for I had heard from her that Law had been the means of bringing them together. I added that I was in a hurry to execute a commission relating to the affair, which he would hear all about from the Regent or from myself when I was at liberty. He seemed to breathe more freely on hearing this; and I went off to Fontanieu's house in the Place Vendôme.

I had been able to render an important service to Fontanieu at the time when the special taxes imposed on financiers came before the Council of Regency. His daughter was married to Castelmoron, a nephew of M. de

Lausun's. At this time M. and Madame de Lausun were engaged in a lawsuit about their claim to the property of Randan, part of the estate of the late Duke de Foix ; this suit was to be decided by a special commission, and the case for M. and Madame de Lausun was entirely managed by Fontanieu. When I arrived at his door I was told that he had gone to a meeting of the commission in the Marais, a distant quarter. The porter, seeing my vexation, said that if I would go in and see Madame de Fontanieu, he would send out and inquire whether his master had really gone, for he knew he intended to make a call in the neighbourhood first. So I went up to Madame de Fontanieu, whom I had often met at the Lausuns' house, and found her alone. I made Madame de Lausun's lawsuit my pretext for wishing to see Fontanieu about some new point which had cropped up, and talked about it to the best of my ability. Fontanieu soon came in, for his servant had found him still in the neighbourhood ; but then I had considerable difficulty in getting him by himself ; for his wife knew quite as much about the case as he did, and they both begged me to discuss it there, and not give myself the trouble of going to his office At one time I thought I should have to give it up, but at last, by dint of telling Madame de Fontanieu that I could not think of boring her with business talk, I managed to get him away.

When we were alone in his office I talked about the lawsuit for a minute or two, to give the servants time to disappear ; then, to his great astonishment, I opened the doors and made sure that nobody was listening, closing them carefully behind me. I then told Fontanieu that there was no question of the lawsuit ; I was the bearer of an important commission from the Duke of Orleans, which would require all his energy and must be kept absolutely secret ; but, before confiding it to him, I must first know whether His Royal Highness could rely implicitly on his devotion. How shocking is the effect of calumny, when artfully invented and disseminated !—no sooner had Fontanieu heard these words than he turned as white as a sheet, and trembled (literally) from head to foot. With some difficulty he stammered out that he was at the service of His Royal Highness so far as his duty would permit. I smiled, and looked steadily at him ; my smile apparently made him aware that he owed me an apology for showing

suspicion of any commission passing through my hands; he made me one immediately, but with the embarrassment of a man unwilling to disclose what had passed through his mind in the first moment of surprise. I reassured him to the best of my ability; said I had answered for him to the Duke of Orleans; and then told him that we required his official assistance in the arrangements for a *lit-de-justice*.

The words were hardly out of my mouth when he gave several heavy sighs of relief, as though a millstone had been lifted off his breast, asking me several times whether that was really all we wanted from him. In his joy at getting off so cheaply he promised all the assistance in his power; and I must say that he kept his word admirably, both as regards the work itself and the absolute secrecy which he maintained. He had never seen a *lit-de-justice*, and had not the slightest notion of what was required. I sat down at his writing-table and drew a plan of the assembly, dictating the necessary explanations to him, as I did not wish to leave anything in my handwriting; I also moved his furniture about, to show him the general arrangements, so that he might be able to fit up a room in the Tuileries with as little delay as possible. I did not leave him till I felt sure that he quite understood me; then I drove away, and when I had gone a little distance I stopped the carriage and told my coachman, as if by an afterthought, to drive to the Palais-Royal; this was to prevent my servants from suspecting that anything important was going on.

On arriving there I was met by Ibagnet, the concierge of the Palais-Royal, with a message from the Regent, begging me to write to him; for this was the hour consecrated to the *roués* and to supper, which no business, however important, was allowed to disturb. With some indignation I sat down in his winter-cabinet to inform him what I had been doing; and I was forced to the unpleasant necessity of asking Ibagnet not to give my letter to the Regent till he was in a fit condition to read it and burn it afterwards. I had not returned home very long before M. de la Force arrived to ask what progress had been made, and he was highly pleased on hearing my report.

Next morning, Sunday, the 21st of August, as I was getting out of bed at half-past seven, I was told that one of M. le Duc's servants had been waiting for some time

with a letter for me. I may remark that I had never had much to do with M. le Duc; of late, indeed, I had treated him and the other Princes with a negligence which was not very becoming on my part. I opened the letter, which he had written overnight with his own hand; it ran as follows: "Sir, I think it absolutely necessary that we should talk over the affair you know of, and the earlier the better. If possible, I should like to see you to-morrow (Sunday) morning; will you kindly say at what time you can call upon me? or, if you prefer it, I will go to you. Choose the course you think least likely to attract notice, for it is better not to arouse the attention of the public. I hope to receive your answer to-morrow morning; in the meantime, I beg you to count upon my friendship, and I trust you will extend yours to me. Signed, H. de Bourbon."

I asked the servant some questions about the hour of M. le Duc's *lever*, and whether it was usually attended by many people; after considering the matter, I thought it would be less risky for me to go there than for M. le Duc to come to my house, as he might be noticed by President Portail, who lived opposite to me, and might very likely be at home on a Sunday morning. I went to the Hôtel de Condé accordingly; I found M. le Duc just finishing his toilet, and fortunately no one was with him except servants. He received me with the self-possessed bearing of an older man—politely, but without undue eagerness; indeed, he made the remark that it was something new to see me there. I excused myself on the ground that on most days I had to attend the Council in the morning, and that he had usually been away from Paris on the other days; adding that, the hour of the Council's meeting having now been altered, I hoped to be able to pay my respects to him more frequently in future. His toilet was now completed, and he asked me to come into another room, where he offered me an arm-chair, took one exactly like it himself, and, sitting opposite each other, we began our conversation.

After apologising for the liberty he had taken, explaining that he thought the business so urgent that no time was to be lost, he asked me to tell him plainly whether I did not agree with him that a blow struck at the Parliament would be of no avail unless at the same time one was aimed at the prime instigator of all its proceedings. From what

the Regent had said on the previous day I expected something of this sort; but I was glad to be able, without appearing stupid, to contrive that he should be the first to mention M. du Maine by name. I then asked him how he proposed to strike M. du Maine. "By depriving him of the King's education," he replied. I said that could be done at any time, and there was no need to mix up that question with the *lit-de-justice*; but M. le Duc answered that the Duke of Orleans had taken it into his head, rightly or wrongly, that M. du Maine could not be deprived of his office except in a *lit-de-justice*. He asked me, therefore, to give him my candid opinion on two points: first, whether, putting aside all consideration of the Duke of Orleans' private interests, it would not be for the advantage of the State to take the King out of M. du Maine's hands; and, secondly, whether in that case it would not be wise to profit by the opportunity of the *lit-de-justice* already decided on rather than wait for another which might never recur.

I saw there was no evading this issue, and that I must enter the lists in earnest. I confess that the more I considered the question the more convinced I was that it would be unwise to attack M. du Maine, but I had to keep strict watch over my own personal inclinations, and perhaps this led me to exaggerate the danger. But I could not bear the thought of allowing my private interests to influence me in a matter which might lead to very serious consequences for the State; and, the dearer those interests were to me, the more determined I was to put them aside and act throughout as a man of honour should do. In my reply, therefore, I came straight to the point; I said that no reasonable and impartial person would deny that it was expedient, in the interests of the State, of the Regent, and of the King himself that the King's education should be taken out of the hands of M. du Maine; but at the same time everybody would agree that to attempt such a thing would be extremely dangerous. I pointed out how powerful M. du Maine was, with his governments and high appointments; how easy it would be for him to throw the country into confusion if attacked on such a vital point; how greatly his powers for mischief would be increased by the adhesion of the Parliament, if both were struck at the same time; and what strength this combination would

derive from the support of the Count de Toulouse, with his great establishments, and, more important still, with his high personal reputation. The one thing, I said, to be dreaded and avoided at all costs was a civil war, and I thought the surest way of bringing one about was to attack M. du Maine.

M. le Duc admitted that in the present condition of the kingdom a civil war would be absolute ruin; but added that, in his opinion, far from an attack on M. du Maine leading to civil troubles, it would be the surest way to avoid them. He reminded me of my admission that the King ought to be taken out of M. du Maine's hands; that being so, the question was, whether a more favourable opportunity for doing so could be expected than the present; whether, indeed, there was any certainty that another opportunity would ever be found at all. The longer M. du Maine was left in his present position the more difficult it would be to remove him, for the King would become accustomed to him; he had already gained ground by the mere fact of his having the charge of the education, for people were beginning to look upon him as the future ruler of the State when the King should have attained his majority, and as time went on his influence would become stronger still. He agreed that it was unfortunate that M. du Maine's case should be complicated with that of the Parliament, but it was unavoidable, and we must get over that difficulty as well as we could.

He would speak frankly to me, he continued, about the Duke of Orleans, not as to his intimate friend, but as to a man of honour whom he knew he could trust implicitly. If he could rely on the Regent taking another opportunity to deprive M. du Maine of his office he would not urge his request on the present occasion; but I knew better than himself how little reliance could be placed on his word. Three times already had the Duke of Orleans promised him to remove M. du Maine: once, at the time of the King's death; again on the day after his proclamation as Regent; and a third time on the occasion of the dispute between the Princes of the Blood and the bastards; and each time he had failed to keep his word. It would be sheer folly to rely on such promises any longer; and for their sake to let slip the opportunity which now presented itself. This, he said, was the cause of what I should probably consider his

obstinacy ; for he was convinced that, not only the Duke of Orleans, but the Princes of the Blood would be ruined if M. du Maine was still about the King's person at the time when he attained his majority ; the growth of M. du Maine's influence was already too perceptible, and it would be folly to allow it to go on unchecked.

When M. le Duc had concluded his arguments, of which the above is merely an abridgement, he appealed to me to say candidly whether he was not right ; and I could not deny that all he had said was perfectly true.

" But, sir," I said, " will that prevent civil war ? All this shows what a mistake it was to allow the bastards to retain their position after the King's death, when everybody expected and wished for their abasement. Now that they have been left undisturbed for three years, when their position has been apparently confirmed by the decision in the dispute between them and the legitimate Princes, would not an attempt to interfere with them precipitate us into civil troubles ? Another thing, how can you expect to stop there ? How can you leave the command of the artillery and Swiss Guards, together with the government of two important and turbulent provinces like Guyenne and Languedoc, in the hands of a man whom you have mortally offended, whom you have deprived of the care of the King's education, and with it, not only of his present influence, but of his vast schemes for the future ? "

" Well, then," said M. le Duc, " these commands must be taken from him ! "

" Surely, sir," I replied, " you do not mean that seriously ? He cannot be deprived of his commands unless he has committed a crime ; and of what crime can you accuse him ? If you allege his collusion and secret understandings with the Parliament you will only bind that body to his service more firmly than ever. Nor, under present circumstances, can you make a crime of his intrigues with Spain, even supposing that you can prove them ; they will appear to the public in the light of a personal offence against the Regent which does not affect the King or the State ; just as his dealings with the Parliament will be ascribed to a laudable zeal for the protection of the national finances. Unless you can prove him guilty of a crime, deprivation of his commands would be an act of tyranny, which would arouse the fears and resentment of every man holding an

official position of any kind; they would be justified in combining for resistance to a measure threatening their own safety. You would, moreover, have to reckon with the fury of Madame du Maine, who declared openly during the life-time of the late King that, sooner than allow her husband to be deprived of any of the advantages which had been granted to him, she would not hesitate to set the whole kingdom in a blaze. Now, sir," I continued, "you cannot doubt the sincerity of my conviction when I urge you so perseveringly not to attack M. du Maine. I will confess to you that nothing is dearer to my heart than the interests of my dignity as Duke and Peer; I count my fortune as nothing in comparison. The bastards have done more than any one to degrade that dignity, and nothing would give me so much pleasure as the restoration of our precedence over them. Now I know well that so long as M. du Maine is left in charge of the King's education the rank of the bastards will not be altered; I know also that if he is deprived of it they cannot retain their present position. To reduce them to their proper position nothing more is necessary than for the Regent to grant the prayer of the petition presented to him by the Peers in a body at the time of your lawsuit with the bastards. Moreover, I have the strongest desire for vengeance on M. du Maine for his treachery to us in the affair of the cap. When I stifle my personal feelings so far as to dissuade you earnestly from attacking him you will believe that I must be very firmly convinced that to do so would be dangerous to the State; I can bring forward no stronger argument than that."

M. le Duc listened with great attention, and remained silent for a minute or two when I had finished; then, in a quiet but firm tone, which I do not like to hear a man assume in a business discussion, because it shows that he has made up his mind unalterably, he said:

"I quite admit the reality of the dangers which you have pointed out, but there are two considerations which in my mind outweigh them altogether: one is, that the Duke of Orleans and I are ruined if M. du Maine is left in charge of the education till the King attains his majority; the other, that if we do not avail ourselves of this opportunity to displace him, he will certainly never be displaced at all. Turn the matter as you will, that is the whole point, for I will not

fall into the snare of trusting the promise of the Duke of Orleans, nor do I intend to sit down quietly with the prospect of total ruin in four years' time."

"But what about civil war?" I asked.

"This is what I think about civil war," he said. "M. du Maine will either be prudent, or he will not; we shall watch him and soon find out which course he means to adopt. If, as I expect, he keeps quiet, there will be no more trouble; if not, there will be no difficulty in stripping him of his commands."

"But suppose his brother, whose province is already half-revolted, should join him, what then?" I asked.

"He will not join him," replied M. le Duc; "he is too honourable a man. But we must keep an eye on him, and prevent him from going to Brittany."

"By arresting him, I suppose?" I asked.

"Certainly," he said, "there would be nothing else for it, and he would deserve it; for, of course, he would have been warned not to go."

"But, sir," I replied, "consider to what all this is leading you. You run the risk of driving into open revolt a man justly respected for his character and patriotism; who has hitherto held aloof from the intrigues of his brother; but who will consider it a point of honour to side with him, as he did in the dispute between the bastards and the legitimate Princes, although he disapproved of the whole proceedings. As for myself, I confess that I have formed such an esteem for him since the King's death that he has won my affection; to such a degree, indeed, that, to my own astonishment, it has considerably mollified my ardour for my rank. And you, who are his nephew, and were placed under his care when you first came into society, are you entirely uninfluenced by consideration for him?"

"Oh! for that matter," he said, "I am extremely fond of the Count de Toulouse, and would sacrifice a good deal to save him. But this is a case of necessity. Put yourself in my place; how can I go on for four years with the certain prospect of being crushed at the end of them? If there are to be civil troubles they will be less formidable now than if they are postponed, for in the meantime the cabal will be continually growing in strength and influence; as a matter of fact, if we act promptly, I believe there will be no trouble at all."

Seeing that I could make no impression on him, I thought it as well to make a brief digression, to give us both time for reflection ; besides, I was anxious to sound him on the subject of the Dukes. I told him I thought he had made a great mistake at the time of his dispute with the bastards in not accepting our assistance on behalf of the legitimate Princes, for a general demonstration on our part would have embarrassed the Regent and forced him to reduce the bastards to their proper rank, according to the date of their peerages. But, I added, we knew the reason, the Princes of the Blood wished to have an intermediate class between themselves and the peers : a great mistake on their part, for we could never pretend to be their equals, whereas the bastards were continually encroaching.

M. le Duc admitted that he had made a mistake, partly out of consideration for the Count de Toulouse ; but he was ready to repair it, and would consent to the reduction of the bastards to their proper rank among the peers. He added that he had already spoken to the Regent about it, not as a matter which he cared much about personally, but in hopes that it might facilitate a decision ; that he had, in fact, prepared and submitted to the Regent the drafts of three alternative edicts for him to choose from : the first dealing with the King's education, the second with the intermediate rank, the third with the reduction of the bastards to their proper rank among the peers. On hearing this, I confess that human nature almost got the better of me, but I managed to restrain myself ; and, after a few remarks on that subject, I asked him what he meant to do about the education.

" To ask for it," he said with some vivacity.

" Naturally," I replied ; " but do you care to have it ? "

" Why, no," he said. " At my age you cannot suppose that I care to make a prisoner of myself. But to ask for it myself is, so far as I can see, the only way to take it from M. du Maine."

" Excuse me," I said, " there is another way : take it from M. du Maine, but give it to nobody ; it is a useless post. Let Marshal de Villeroy exercise his functions without a superior ; you cannot very well get rid of him, in spite of the insinuations which he is always making."

" That is all very well," he replied, " but you cannot

deprive M. du Maine of his post if nobody asks for it, and I am the only person in a position to do so."

"But," I said, "to ask for it and to insist on having it are two different things. Cannot you arrange with the Regent to remove M. du Maine, and leave the post vacant?"

"It is true," he replied, "that I do not care in the least about having charge of the King's education, but it does not suit me to ask for a thing and not receive it. Circumstances compel me to ask for this post; consequently I must have it."

I saw that he was inflexible, and that it was useless to say more on this point.

To change the subject, while watching for an opening to renew my efforts on behalf of M. du Maine, I thought I would take the opportunity to get information on a matter which was causing the Government some uneasiness. I asked M. le Duc if he would allow me to speak confidentially about a member of his family, to which he responded with the frank politeness of a man anxious to please and conciliate.

"Then, sir," I said, "since you are so good as to allow me, I would ask what we have to expect from your brother, the Count de Charolais. He is travelling in Spain; his movements are eccentric, and all sorts of rumours are afloat. What does it all mean?"

"I know nothing about it myself," said M. le Duc; "my brother is a flighty boy, who makes up his mind to a thing, does it, and never lets us know about it till afterwards."

"Even to know that is a good deal," I said, "for I have too high an opinion of the Count de Charolais to believe that he would decide on anything really important without your knowledge or that of your mother, Madame la Duchesse. You are very young yourself, but you are several years his senior, and stand in the place of his father. I wish you could give us some information on this subject, for it is of importance."

For all reply, M. le Duc took a letter from his table; it was from his brother, and simply gave in a few lines the route of a journey he intended to make to Genoa; not a word more. M. le Duc read the letter, and handed it to me, protesting that he knew nothing more. Nevertheless, as I pursued the subject, he went so far as to say that his brother had no fixed appointment in France, and if, as was reported, he were offered one in Spain, he thought, as a

younger son, without fortune or official post, he would not do wrong in accepting it.

"Still, sir," I said, "this younger son has an allowance of 60,000 livres; and at his age it is something to be able to live with you at Chantilly or the Hôtel de Condé, with every kind of amusement at his disposal, at no expense to himself. But if he becomes Viceroy of Catalonia he will be in the service of the King of Spain; how can you expect the Duke of Orleans to trust you implicitly after that? You will have one foot on each side of the border; you will be looked upon as an intermediary to whom every man of note who wishes to communicate secretly with Spain will have recourse; even your principal servants, without your knowledge very likely, will be used in the same way; your brother will be a thorn in the side of the Duke of Orleans. How can you expect him, under such circumstances, to sacrifice the bastards for the sake of an alliance with you? I will use your own expression: put yourself in the place of the Duke of Orleans. Would you, in his place, make irreconcileable enemies of the bastards unless you felt sure that you could trust the Princes of the Blood?"

M. le Duc felt that I was right; all he could say was that he doubted whether any appointment in Spain would be offered to his brother, but he declined to be responsible for him. At last he said that if a suitable position were offered to him in France his brother would return at once. Thereupon we had a long discussion as to what offer could be made. Among other things he suggested a marriage between the Count de Charolais and Mademoiselle de Valois, the Regent's younger daughter; but, as at that time I was negotiating secretly for her marriage with the Prince of Piedmont, I did not give him much encouragement. In the end he asked me to speak to the Duke of Orleans on the subject without delay, which I promised to do, telling him that, at the same time, I should have to repeat the substance of our conversation to him, and reminding him that I was still of opinion that it would be unwise to attack M. du Maine on this occasion. M. le Duc thanked me for speaking so openly, and said he was emboldened to ask me a delicate question which he hoped I would answer in the same way.

He went on to say that he should like to know what I thought about the succession to the Regency in case of the death of the Duke of Orleans. He would look upon such

an event, he said, as the greatest possible misfortune for the State and for himself personally; but it was necessary to consider possible contingencies, and, though there was no appearance of ill-health in the Duke of Orleans, yet the life he led was unfortunately only too capable of killing him. I told him I would reply quite candidly, but only on condition that he promised never to repeat what I said. He gave me his word; and I then said that the ordinary rule of appointing the King's nearest relation of full age ought undoubtedly to be observed; consequently there was nobody but himself capable of holding the office.

"I am delighted to hear you say so," said M. le Duc, with an air of great relief; "for I will not conceal from you that I know for certain that the Duchess of Orleans is determined that the Duke of Chartres shall be appointed to succeed his father if he dies; and that a regular party has been formed to carry out that plan, and is already at work; and I have been assured that you were at its head." I smiled, and tried to put in a word, but he continued hastily: "I was very sorry to hear it; not that I had any doubt about my rights, but there are certain people whom one is always sorry to find in opposition. The report did not surprise me, for I know on what very friendly terms you are with the Duchess of Orleans; moreover, I saw you often conversing confidentially with the Count de Toulouse, and part of the plan is to make him Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, the Duchess of Orleans acting as guardian to her son. I thought that, on her account, you were all in favour of the bastards, and a promoter of these designs. Our conversation has shown me, to my great pleasure, that you are not a supporter of the bastards, and that has encouraged me to speak freely about this matter."

I smiled again, and said: "Speak plainly, sir; I have been represented to you as a sort of enemy. You see now, from the manner in which I have had the honour of talking to you, how little truth there is in that insinuation. But I must tell you briefly that I formerly had a lawsuit with Madame de Lussan, a fraudulent person whom I was obliged to unmask. I proceeded with all possible respect for your family, who took an interest in her; M. le Prince received me most courteously, and took no part in the proceedings. On the other hand, Madame la Princesse, your father, M. le Duc, and Madame la Duchesse would neither see me nor

listen to any one on my behalf. Nothing hurts one more than to have polite advances spurned with contempt; and I confess I was not very measured in my language. I never entered M. le Duc's house afterwards, and have seen very little indeed of Madame la Duchesse since his death. That, sir, is what caused a coolness between myself and the Hôtel de Condé, and it is what makes people there inclined to speak evil of me; but I beg you to distrust anything you may hear there, and believe only in what you see of me yourself."

M. le Duc received this explanation with infinite politeness, saying he hoped to deserve my friendship, and begging pardon again for the liberty he had taken; in short, nothing could be more engaging or less princely than his manner. I replied with becoming respect, and then said that, though capable of strong attachments, I had never in my life knowingly allowed my private feelings to lead me into doing an unjust or foolish action, and it would be both foolish and unjust to give my support to the Duke of Chartres in case the Regency should unfortunately become vacant.

"As for the Count de Toulouse, sir," I continued, "I like him and have a singular esteem for him. I wish him every sort of advantage, but I cannot forget that he is a bastard, and that he has been unjustly placed above me. Never with my consent shall a bastard become Lieutenant-General of the kingdom, to the prejudice of the just rights of the Princes of the Blood. Those are my sentiments, on which you may rely. But I beg you once more never to repeat what I have said, for I do not wish to quarrel with the Duchess of Orleans over a contingency which, I hope, will never arise. I know how obstinate she is on this point; hitherto I have managed to put her off with evasive replies; I am sure you would not like to make trouble between us."

He again repeated his promise of secrecy, with many polite assurances. I cut these short by asking him to come to some agreement about the subject of our conference, for we had been a long time together, and it was not advisable to arouse the curiosity of people who were perhaps already waiting for him.

He said the only point he insisted on was the removal of M. du Maine from about the King's person, and he begged me to see the Duke of Orleans that morning; if it would facilitate matters, he said, he was ready to agree to which-

ever of the three draft edicts the Regent preferred. I asked him also to see the Regent, but to let me go first; and we agreed that I should be at the Palais-Royal at half-past eleven, and he should arrive there an hour later. On taking my leave I told him that I would state his arguments fairly to the Regent, laying stress on his fixed determination to remove M. du Maine, but I would promise nothing further. I was still of opinion that such a step would be dangerous at the present moment, and should explain my reasons; it would then remain for them to settle between themselves what should be done. M. le Duc was satisfied with this, and we separated with the utmost politeness on his part; indeed, he went so far as to beg me several times to be his friend, with all the eagerness of a private person asking a favour, and in the tone and manner of the Princes of the Blood in bygone days. He insisted on reconducting me, though I purposely passed first through the door to prevent it; and it was with difficulty that I stopped him when we reached his antechamber, where luckily there were only a few persons waiting.

I went to my house, and then to hear Mass in the Jacobin Church, which I could enter from my garden. My thoughts wandered a good deal, but God gave me grace to pray earnestly for guidance, and for His help to lay aside my personal feelings and to seek only His glory and the welfare of the State. My prayers were heard; and I may say sincerely that throughout this affair I had no reason to reproach myself; I thought of nothing but the good of the country, and swerved neither to right nor left.

Fontanieu was waiting for me when I returned from Mass; and I had to put up with his questions about the mechanical arrangements for the coming ceremony, as though I had nothing else on my mind. I arranged my room as for a *lit-de-justice*, with table-cloths; and explained several essential local details of the ceremony which he had not clearly understood. I had told him to see the Regent that morning, and it was necessary that he should be well prepared beforehand. He received his orders in the afternoon.

CHAPTER VI

1718

I report my conversation with the Duke de Bourbon to the Regent—I point out once more to the Regent his deplorable weakness and warn him against the Duke—I miss the Duke in the Tuileries gardens—The Parliamentary Edicts annulled—M. de la Force and the Council of Regency—The matter of the King's education—A discovery—I meet the Duke de Bourbon—Our interview—My information about his brother—The Regent's trivial objections to the arrangements for the *lit-de-justice*—Conversation between the Count de Toulouse and the Regent—Arrangements with Fagon and the Abbé Dubois—Further talk with the Duke de Bourbon—I try to gain some advantage for the peers—and the reduction of the bastards—The Duke de Bourbon promises to ask for both from the Regent—I propose the Count de Toulouse be exempted—The Duke agrees.

Sunday, 21st of August.—At half-past eleven I arrived at the Palais-Royal; but I found the Regent engaged with Marshal d'Huxelles and Cardinals de Rohan and Bissy, who were reading papers relating to Cardinal de Noailles' affair. I was on thorns as I waited in the antechamber; and still more so when, at half-past twelve precisely, I saw M. le Duc come in. After about a quarter of an hour he consented to let the Regent know that he was there; I was much annoyed that he should have the opportunity of speaking before me, but his interview lasted only a few minutes; when he came out he said the Regent had told him that his business with the Cardinals would last an hour longer, so he had decided to go away and return before the meeting of the Council. I forgot to mention that I had made an appointment to meet him that evening in the Tuileries gardens, if I thought it advisable after my conversation with the Duke of Orleans; and I was to let him know at the Council.

I was much relieved to see him depart without having had time enough to say anything of consequence; I felt, however, that I should still be in the same difficulty if I did not take

the liberty of interrupting His Royal Highness, so I sent in a message begging him to come out, as I had something of importance to tell him. He did so immediately; I drew him aside to a window, and told him that he was wasting precious time with the Cardinals; that M. le Duc was coming back, and before he did so I ought to report the substance of a long conversation we had had that morning. He said he had guessed as much from what M. le Duc had told him, and it was in order to gain time to see me that he had got rid of him on the pretext that he was busy with the Cardinals; he begged me to stay, and he would dismiss them. He went back and told them that he was tired, and would finish their business another time; in a few minutes they came out with their portfolios under their arms. I entered in their place, the doors were shut, and for more than two hours the Duke of Orleans and I walked up and down the gallery.

Long as my conversation with M. le Duc had been I repeated it to the Duke of Orleans, omitting nothing, and commenting on it as I proceeded. He was struck by the force of my arguments in favour of leaving M. du Maine alone, and rather alarmed at M. le Duc's tenacity on this point. I could not refrain from reminding him of the great mistake he had made in not overthrowing the bastards at the time of the King's death, when everybody expected and wished for it. "M. le Duc," I said, "tells you that he does not care to have the charge of the King's education, but that if he asks for it he must have it; and that it cannot be taken from M. du Maine unless he does so. Consider what this apparently simple statement really means. The second subject in the kingdom, under cover of gratifying his private animosity against M. du Maine, is trying to strengthen his position without giving you umbrage, by obtaining the control of the King's education. When he has obtained it he will be a personage to be reckoned with, for you will not be able to deprive him of the post, as you propose to deprive M. du Maine; and it is a serious thing for a Regent to have to reckon with anybody. If you had abased the bastards at the proper time there would have been no superintendent of the education, and M. le Duc, being then under age, could not have asked for the post; Marshal de Villeroy would have been left in sole charge, and you would have had no difficulty in controlling any private

person, however distinguished. What a difference that would have made!"

The Regent admitted, with a groan, that I was right, and asked what I advised. I said I thought the best way of avoiding the removal of M. du Maine at this inconvenient moment would be to insist on the immediate return of M. de Charolais; for, according to the notions of the Condé family, that was impracticable owing to the want of an assured position for him in France; yet they could hardly think such a demand unreasonable, since the Regent had a right to know whether he could count on the support of the Princes of the Blood if he sacrificed M. du Maine, and it was evident that he could not do so while M. de Charolais remained abroad in a position to accept a foreign appointment such as the governorship of Catalonia.

The Regent highly approved of this suggestion, and assured me that he would speak firmly to M. le Duc; he added that I had better meet M. le Duc that evening in the Tuileries gardens, and report to him next morning what impression had been made on his mind by his interview with himself. He went on to say that he doubted whether the *lit-de-justice* could be held on the Tuesday, as the Keeper of the Seals thought the time insufficient for him to prepare for all he would have to do. I did not like this; it seemed to be the prelude to further postponements, and perhaps to an abandonment of the plan altogether. I asked him what day he proposed to fix, warning him that preparations for strong measures subsequently abandoned always led to disastrous consequences, for his original intentions would certainly become known sooner or later. "Friday is the earliest possible day," he replied, "for Wednesday and Thursday are holidays." "Very well," I said, "provided that Friday is really definitely fixed, whatever happens"; and he seemed to have made up his mind thoroughly on that point.

Then he began speaking with great bitterness about the Parliament. "Well, Sir," I said, "what has happened is entirely your own fault. If you had kept your word, and decided the question of the cap; if you had not sacrificed us Dukes in order to gain the good graces of the Parliament, you would have shown that you meant to be Regent; whereas, your weakness encouraged the Parliament to encroach on your authority till it aspires to nothing less

than getting the whole power of the Regency into its own hands."

"It is true," he replied with some vivacity, "but at that time I was surrounded by people who took the side of the Parliament against you, and gave me no peace."

"Yes," I said, "and who, for their own private interests, did their best to alienate you from your true friends, especially from myself, and were perpetually telling you that I looked upon everything from the standpoint of a Duke and Peer. You see now whether I talk to you as a peer when the interests of my dignity seem to me to conflict with your own and with those of the State. Now, I ask you candidly, have you ever known me, when advising you, to forget that I am your servant and remember only that I am a peer?"

"Oh, well, sometimes, I think," he said, not as though he really thought so, but as if he did not like being driven into a corner. I would not push him too far.

"Come, Sir," I said, "you will do me better justice than that, but on this occasion, at any rate, you see how little I am thinking of the affair of the cap and how strongly I am supporting the bastards. Compare my advice with my personal inclinations; consider, too, how easy it would be, if you yield to M. le Duc, for us Dukes to gain all we want; for if you deprive M. du Maine of the education you may just as well reduce him to his proper rank at the same time; it would not make him more your enemy, and you would regain the support of the peers whom you have alienated."

"There would be no objection to that," he replied, "but I must not deprive M. du Maine of the education at this time. It is my interest to do it some day; but you are quite right, this is not the proper moment. M. le Duc alarms me; he insists so very firmly on his demands. He says he does not care about having the charge of the King's education, but still he must have it; and that would not suit my views."

"No, Sir," I said firmly, "it would not suit them at all. But make up your mind definitely not to let him have it; for if you give way I foresee that, your character being what it is, you will always distrust him; there will be plenty of people to make mischief between you, and the result will be a continual struggle which of you shall have the greater influence in the State, not only now but in the future. Reflect on M. le Duc's position as first Prince of the Blood,

and also on what he has shown you of the obstinacy of his character. With these considerations I leave you, to go to my dinner."

"Here is a greedy fellow!" said the Duke of Orleans, laughing; "he gives you a string of sage reflections, and winds up by talking about his dinner!"

"Yes," I said, laughing too, "I am thinking of my dinner, though I do not think so much of my supper as some people. However, since it is your pleasure not to eat any dinner, do think seriously of all this while you are waiting for M. le Duc, who will be here directly; and prepare yourself to meet a determined attack!"

Then I went off to dinner, and not without necessity, for I was quite exhausted. It was now very late, past three o'clock; so that as soon as I had dined I had to hurry off to the Council, which, however, did not begin business till nearly five, the delay being caused by the interview between M. le Duc and the Regent. I whispered to M. le Duc that I would go; meaning to the Tuileries gardens, that being the sign agreed upon between us. When I returned to my house I found Fagon, and we had some talk about the *lit-de-justice*; he seemed to distrust the fidelity of the Keeper of the Seals, and the Duke de la Force, who came in, had the same suspicions. I had great difficulty in bringing the conversation to a close, but it was growing late, and I had to keep my appointment; so I asked Fagon to let me go with him in his carriage to the entrance of the Tuileries at the end of the Pont-Royal; and I ordered my own carriage to meet me later on at the other end of the bridge.

But just as we were driving off we heard "Stop, stop!" It was the Abbé Dubois, and I had to get out and talk to him. I told him we were in a great hurry about some business of Madame de Lausun's, in which Fagon had kindly interested himself; this was a convenient excuse of which I had already availed myself with Fontanieu. It would not have done to mention M. le Duc to the Abbé, for he was a very inquisitive person, and his curiosity would have been aroused at once. But, unfortunately, I could not get rid of him in time; when I arrived at the Tuileries I could not find M. le Duc anywhere, though I went all through the gardens three times. At last I went to the place where the carriages were waiting, to see if his was among them.

There I found my footmen, who began bawling to the people to make room for me. I could have beaten them with pleasure; however, I merely asked them quietly what they were doing there, and sent my carriage away to the place I had indicated. Then I returned to the gardens, but all I gained by it was to put myself into a violent perspiration.

Monday, August 22.—Next morning, at half-past eleven, I went to the Palais-Royal. I must here mention that the Duke de la Force was very desirous of being appointed a member of the Council of Regency, and this was partly the cause of the zeal which he showed against the Parliament. The Regent had insisted that, at the meeting of the Council on the previous day (Sunday), the first business should be to annul the edicts of the Parliament; I thought this premature, and had remonstrated when I saw him in the morning, but he had taken the notion so firmly into his head that he would listen to no argument. M. de la Force, hearing of this, contrived to persuade the Regent to order him to attend the Council, as Vice-President of the Council of Finance, with certain papers relating to the financial questions touched upon in the edicts. The matter, however, was soon settled; the Keeper of the Seals read the edicts, commented on them, and moved that they should be annulled, which was carried unanimously. The Regent then directed the Keeper of the Seals to draw up a proclamation in accordance with the resolution, adding that in a matter of such importance it would be well for the Council to meet again in two or three days to consider the proclamation before it was made public.

The Regent had then to decide whether M. de la Force should continue to attend the Council; he was not very anxious that he should do so, and, as the business had gone off quite smoothly without M. de la Force's assistance being required, there was no reason why he should give him a special reward. M. de la Force felt this, and came to ask for my assistance with extreme importunity. I returned an evasive answer, for I did not at all want to see him in the Council, which was already absurdly numerous; moreover, I knew that his appointment would be immediately attributed to me.

So when I saw the Regent on the Monday morning I congratulated him at once on his success of the previous day, adding that there had been no need to use the ammunition

which M. de la Force had brought with him. He understood what I meant, and said that, in order that it should not seem as if M. de la Force had been sent for purposely, he had made him read a report on some trifling matter connected with finance. "Yes," I said, but it was so trifling that nobody could understand why he should report it, still less why he should remain in the Council when he had finished. And what are you going to do with him to-day?" "He would like very much to join the Council of Regency," replied the Regent with a smile, as if seeking my approval. "I know he would," I said; "but we are too numerous already." "We are, indeed," he replied, "far too numerous"; adding a moment later, "but, after all, he would only make one more." "But then," I said, "what about the Duke de Guiche, who is Vice-President of the Council for War, as M. de la Force is of the Council of Finance? How can you leave him out?" "Faith, you are right," said the Duke of Orleans. "Very well, then, I will not appoint M. de la Force."

I had raised the objection purposely, but then my conscience smote me for having excluded a man who trusted to me for help. After a brief internal struggle I said, "But perhaps you promised him the appointment?" "I rather think there was something of the sort," he replied. "Well, then," I said, "it is for you to decide; I merely reminded you of another man whom it would be an affront to leave out under the circumstances." "I am much obliged to you," he said; "I see that I cannot appoint one without the other." Then, after a short silence, he added: "But, after all, considering our present number and the small importance of most of our business, two more or less will not make much difference." "Then you would like to make the appointment?" I said. "Why, yes, I should," he replied. "In that case, Sir," I said, "do it with a good grace. The Duke de Guiche is in the anteroom; shall I call him in?" "I should be much obliged if you would," he said immediately.

I opened the door, and called the Duke de Guiche, who was at the far end of the antechamber; as he came up the Duke of Orleans advanced towards the door, so that I overheard the whole conversation. The Regent asked him if he would kindly consent to join the Council of Regency, assuring him that he would not ask him to do so if he thought

it would interfere with his duties on the Council for War, or with his personal convenience in any way; putting it, in short, as if he were asking the Duke to do him a great favour by accepting the appointment. The Duke de Guiche, completely taken aback, not so much by the offer itself as by the way in which it was made, bowed and stammered, stammered and bowed; the Duke of Orleans returned his bows; it was like a scene in a play. At last, impatient and bursting with suppressed laughter, I put an end to it by congratulating the Duke de Guiche. As he went out he grasped my hand; and he waited outside till I had finished my interview with the Regent, which took no little time, to thank me. He told all his friends and relations that he owed his appointment entirely to me, which indeed was true; but, what was not quite so proper on his part, he almost apologised for accepting it. At least that was the interpretation generally ascribed to his remarks, and it did not produce a very good effect. It is true that the appointment was unsought for, and that the Regent had almost begged him to accept it as a favour to himself; but he need not have told the public so.

As soon as he had left us I told the Duke of Orleans how I had missed M. le Duc the previous evening, and asked how matters stood between them. He said M. le Duc was the most obstinate man he had ever seen, and insisted on having the education. "And what about his brother?" I asked. "He is not very consistent on that point," said the Regent; "but I can see that they work together like thieves at a fair. Sometimes he tells me, as he told you, that his brother is a foolish boy who does whatever comes into his head, and that he cannot be answerable for him; but when I asked point-blank whether his brother would return if offered a suitable establishment in France, and whether I could trust him, he said he could answer for him in that case. I pointed out the inconsistency, and he seemed rather embarrassed; but I am no further advanced." "No," I said, "you only know what you would not very well doubt before; but it seems to me that, to make sure of having M. le Duc on your side, you must do two things: give him the education, and find a lucrative appointment for his brother. How will you get out of this difficulty?" "It does not embarrass me," said the Regent. "As for the appointment, I have a conclusive answer—there is none vacant, and I cannot

create one. I am not afraid of M. de Charolais in Spain. Alberoni will think twice before embarrassing himself with the burden of a French Prince of the Blood, especially one with nothing in his pockets, who will expect both wealth and authority. As for the education, I will not give way; I have a man under my influence who will, I hope, get this fancy out of M. le Duc's head, and he is coming to see me directly." "May I ask who this man is, Sir?" I said. "It is La Faye, his private secretary," replied the Regent. "He consults him about everything, and, between ourselves, he takes bribes from me." "Very well," I said; "do as you please, only I hope you will manage to save the education." After some more conversation he asked me to try and arrange another meeting with M. le Duc for that evening, and report the result the following, Tuesday, morning.

When I got back to my house I sent word to M. de la Force to attend the meeting of the Council of Regency that afternoon, as he was appointed a member. He came to see me at once, and I had some difficulty in getting rid of him; I never saw a man so delighted. This led to a discovery; wishing to inform Marshal de Villeroy of his appointment, he went to call on him before the meeting of the Council. Passing through the room where it usually assembled he saw Marshal Tallard, who told him that Marshal de Villeroy had dropped off to sleep while he was with him, so he had left him by himself. M. de la Force, however, pushed on, intending to write his name down; as he entered the Marshal's rooms he met Falconnet, a doctor from Lyons, who asked him where he was going. M. de la Force explained, and repeated what Marshal Tallard had told him; whereupon the worthy man, without the slightest intention of saying anything malicious, replied: "The Marshal's servants say he is asleep; but while I was with him M. du Maine and Marshal Villars came in, whereupon they shut themselves up, and they have been together for some time." This was the first thing M. de la Force told me when I arrived in the Council-chamber. Shortly afterwards we saw Marshal Villars come in by the ordinary door, having evidently gone round; then M. du Maine entered from the King's rooms, and, lastly, Marshal de Villeroy. This aroused my suspicions, and I begged M. de la Force to inform the Regent as soon as he arrived, which he did.

In the meantime I was caught by M. le Duc, who said he had looked in vain for me at the Tuileries. I begged him to meet me there that evening, saying I would then explain why I had missed him. I cut him short like this and left him rather abruptly lest our conversation should be noticed, for one is always afraid of exciting remark when one is conscious that there is some reason for it. When the Council was over the Duke of Orleans gave notice of another to be held on the Thursday afternoon, to approve of the proclamation annulling the edicts of the Parliament, and to conclude some business which he purposely left unfinished this afternoon. He took occasion to ask the Princes, who usually went every week to their country houses for shooting, to remain this time and attend the Council. This announcement of another Council meeting helped us greatly in the concealment of our designs.

When evening came I got Louville to drive me to the Tuileries gardens, so as to avoid exciting the curiosity of my servants, who were not used to seeing me frequent public places. I found M. le Duc at the appointed spot, and, after apologising for my absence on the previous evening, I asked him whether anything had been settled between the Regent and himself. He said His Royal Highness had great difficulty in making up his mind; to which I replied that I was not surprised at that, for M. de Charolais' proceedings were a great stumbling-block, and only he could remove it. He said he would guarantee that his brother would return immediately if he were promised the government of a good province; hinting that it might be provided at M. du Maine's expense.

After this we had a long conversation, repeating a good deal which we had already said in our discussion at the Hôtel de Condé. I found him quite determined not to miss this opportunity of depriving M. du Maine of the King's education; he admitted that for some reasons it might be better to postpone it, but he declared that he would not trust the Regent's promises. I said he and the Regent ought to stand by each other; that it was to the Regent's interest, no less than to his own, that the charge of the King's education should be taken out of M. du Maine's hands; and, that being so, I thought he ought to trust His Royal Highness in this matter, and not insist on his acting at an inopportune moment at the risk of causing a civil war; moreover, that he

ought not to press him too strongly for an establishment for M. de Charolais.

"Really, sir," said M. le Duc with some vivacity, "we are arguing in a circle. I have already told you that I believe the risk of civil war to be entirely imaginary. You admit that, sooner or later, the Duke of Maine must be deprived of the education; the Duke of Orleans admits it too, but he will go on putting off the decisive moment, first on one pretext, then on another, as he had done ever since the King's death, in spite of his repeated promises to me. Now my future prospects are at stake as well as his, and I will not have them ruined in this way. The longer the bastards are allowed to increase their influence the more dangerous a civil war will be, if it becomes necessary to defend our rights against them; but, I repeat, I do not believe in that risk. The Count de Toulouse is too sensible, and his brother too timid; so let us dismiss that argument for the future. As regards my brother, let the Duke of Orleans promise to do what he can for him, and leave the rest to me; when the *lit-de-justice* is over he will have plenty of time to make a suitable arrangement, and when it is made my brother will come back at once."

"I know, sir," I said, "that you are to be trusted with a secret, but I must beg you most earnestly not to let the Duke of Orleans perceive that you know what I am about to tell you. I had it from him and I think it necessary to confide it to you, to show you that we know more than you suppose about your brother's movements."

"What is it?" he asked with some emotion, promising to keep the secret.

I did not really care whether he kept it or not, but I thought it as well to exact the promise in order to make a greater impression on him. I then told him that we had found out from intercepted letters (they were written by Alberoni to the Duke of Parma, but I did not tell him that), that among other remittances sent from Spain to Italy was a sum of 10,000 pistoles for a private individual, neither a Sovereign Prince, nor a banker, nor an army contractor, and we thought that this person could only be the Count de Charolais. M. le Duc thanked me warmly for telling him this; but said that all his brother's affairs passed through the hands of M. de Billy, an old and tried retainer of their family, who was incapable of entering into anything of

importance without letting him know; he further assured me, with an air of sincerity which entirely convinced me, that he did not believe that his brother had any understanding whatever with Cardinal Alberoni, or with any one in Spain. It was a relief to me to hear this, and I told him so. He then brought up the subject of a marriage between his brother and Mademoiselle de Valois, but did not press it so much as he had done in our first conversation at the Hôtel de Condé, seeming, in his anxiety for a decision on his own affair, to be content with the prospect of a government for his brother.

Finally, he begged me to see the Duke of Orleans next morning, and to tell him plainly that, so far as he was concerned, everything turned on the events of next Friday. If he then received the charge of the King's education the Regent might depend on his devotion and ardent support; but, if he did not, he would resent it all his life, and would not go to serve him as far as from where we were standing to the round open space in the Tuileries gardens, close to which we had stationed ourselves, to have a little light in the surrounding darkness. I demurred a little against being made the bearer of such a message, but he said that, as he did not object to my urging my side of the question on the Duke of Orleans as forcibly as I chose, he thought he had a right to ask me to repeat his own words.

Seeing him so determined to have his own way, I thought I would at any rate keep him in the favourable humour which he had previously expressed with regard to the question of precedence between the bastards and the Peers, and before our conversation closed I said a few words about it. He promised, quite of his own accord, to tell the Duke of Orleans that, after due consideration of the three draft edicts which he had prepared, he preferred the one reducing the bastards to their rank among the Peers according to seniority. I expected as much after our conversation at the Hôtel de Condé, but nevertheless I could see that he was anxious to please me, and to soften my opposition to any interference with M. du Maine by a consideration which touched me so nearly. Before we separated we agreed to meet again next day at the same time and place, M. le Duc apologising in the most polite manner for giving me so much trouble, to which I replied with all due respect. I thought it better not to escort him through the gardens, so he took

one path, and I took another ; this time I found my carriage and servants at the appointed place, and so returned home.

Tuesday, August 23.—Next morning I was with the Duke of Orleans between nine and ten, and reported what had passed ; he approved of my telling M. le Duc about the 10,000 pistoles, and it was, I could see, a great relief to him to hear that this sum was not for M. de Charolais, and that he had as yet no secret connection with Spain. The harsh declaration of M. le Duc, which I was forced to repeat to him word for word, also made a strong impression upon him ; he denied having broken any promises, but it was easy to see from his manner that M. le Duc's complaints on that head were only too well founded. Talking over the arrangements for the *lit-de-justice* (for our conversation was extremely desultory), I happened to mention that, owing to want of space, the high benches would have only one step to them, but I thought this would suffice to mark the difference. Thereupon he drew himself up and said he could not allow that, for in the Grand Chamber of the Parliament the high benches were raised by five steps. In vain I expostulated, telling him that since I, so infatuated according to him with my dignity as Duke and Peer, was content with one step, he might surely be so too, considering the mechanical difficulties. Not a bit of it ; he insisted that I should see Fontanieu and devise some means of overcoming them.

I was almost driven to despair when I heard this, for the Duke of Orleans had never shown the slightest sense of dignity either for himself or for others ; a little more or less elevation for the high benches could make no difference to himself as Regent, and as for the peers he had treated them too badly for me to believe that he had all of a sudden become so touchy on their behalf. I suspected that, alarmed by M. le Duc's obstinacy, he was trying to back out, and seeking an excuse for giving up the *lit-de-justice* altogether. I did my best to find out whether this suspicion was justified, but without result ; I knew, of course, that if he was really contemplating such a thing he would conceal his intention more carefully from me than from any one.

He then proceeded to tell me of a remarkable conversation he had had with the Count de Toulouse during the previous week. The Count, finding himself alone with him after they had finished some business, said that with his per-

mission he would venture to ask a question, which was, whether he was satisfied with his conduct. The Regent assured him that he was so, completely ; whereupon he said it was rumoured that his brother and Marshal de Villeroy were to be arrested, and they were very uneasy in consequence. The Regent laughed, and said he was not meditating anything of the sort. The Count asked if he might tell his brother so ; and, receiving the Regent's consent, asked him how this rumour could have arisen, and whether M. du Maine had given him any cause for displeasure. The Duke of Orleans replied that he knew nothing about the rumour, but certainly he was not pleased with M. du Maine's conduct ; he asked the Count what he thought of his stirring up the Parliament against him. The Count replied frankly that he should consider that as a criminal proceeding, and asked whether there were good grounds for suspecting his brother of such a thing. The Duke of Orleans said he had ample prooof that he had done so, and proceeded to ask further what the Count thought of an intrigue with Spain and a secret correspondence with Cardinal Alberoni. "Worse still," said the Count ; "I should look upon that as equivalent to high treason." The Regent said he knew for certain that M. du Maine was guilty of it, whereupon the Count replied that he could hardly bring himself to think that his brother was so deeply implicated. As for himself, he added, he had promised fidelity to His Royal Highness, because he considered him as representing the King and the nation ; he could therefore answer for his own loyalty, but he declined any responsibility for his brother.

I agreed with the Regent that this conversation was very important, and that the Count de Toulouse had behaved in a very handsome, straightforward manner. He told me that Marshal de Villeroy had himself spoken to him about the rumour of his impending arrest, and that of M. du Maine, in a very humble tone, and apparently much alarmed. I said that whatever that man did he must be left where he was, for if anything happened to the King after his removal from about his person, all the old horrible calumnies against His Royal Highness would at once revive in full force. He quite agreed with this, saying that, considering the Marshal's age and small ability, it was a matter of indifference whether he retained his post or not.

We then came back to the subject of M. le Duc, and I took

the opportunity to put out a feeler with regard to the rank of the peers. I begged His Royal Highness once more to reflect well before he affronted M. du Maine by depriving him of the King's education, and also before he entrusted it to a Prince of the Blood of M. le Duc's obstinate and determined character; but I reminded him that, if he did make up his mind to do so, he would not render M. du Maine one whit more furious and irreconcileable if he also reduced him to his proper rank among the Peers. He replied that he had already suggested doing so, but M. le Duc had opposed it because he wished to preserve a rank intermediate between the Princes of the Blood and the peers. He added that he told me this plainly, in order that I might not be taken in by M. le Duc's assurances, for without his consent the thing was impossible.

When I left the Regent I felt a rising hope that something might be done for our cause, in the event of the King's education changing hands. I quite realised that neither the Regent nor M. le Duc cared in the least about the restoration of our proper rank, and that both would try to evade the point, especially the former; but I also felt that if M. le Duc could be induced to take the matter up and make a personal favour of it, the Duke of Orleans would no more stand out against him than he would, as it appeared, about the education. It seemed by no means impossible to enlist M. le Duc on our side; he thought he could not do without my help in his negotiations with the Duke of Orleans, and was anxious to conciliate me; moreover, he had already shown some inclination to repair his former mistake in alienating the peers, since one of his three draft edicts contained a clause reducing the bastards to their proper level; now, I thought, was the time to speak to him firmly, and turn his intense desire to obtain the education to good account in forwarding the object of my own wishes, the restoration of our rightful position. This thought kept running in my head all day, but I tried to push it into the background; for I distrusted myself, and feared lest, in pursuing my own personal object, I might be led into approving of something which would bring trouble to the State.

While I was pondering these things the Duke de Chaulnes contrived to obtain admission to my house, just after dinner, although I had barred my door against all visitors except the

few persons who were in the secret. As the son of the Duke de Chevreuse and nephew of the Duke de Beauvilliers, he was one of my most intimate friends ; and as keenly sensitive as myself about everything affecting the dignity of Duke and Peer. He had heard rumours of a quarrel between the Regent and the Parliament, and came to consult me as to whether we could not turn it to our advantage. It grieved me to keep a secret from him, but I had to put him off with vague talk about difficulties in our way, and so on ; and I got rid of him as soon as I could.

I was expected at the Duke de la Force's house, where Fagon and the Abbé Dubois were to meet me, but as they lived at a distance I was there first. I told M. de la Force about the queer difficulty which the Duke of Orleans had made about the steps to the high seats ; he was very much alarmed, thinking, like myself, that it looked like a pretext for evading the *lit-de-justice* altogether. Fagon, when he came, thought so too. He brought the programme which I had dictated to him, and we went over it again ; he had made some very useful additions to it, providing for the suspension of the Parliament from judicial functions in case of a refusal to attend at the Tuileries ; the affixing of seals in various parts of the law-courts, and other matters of practical importance. The Abbé Dubois also made some excellent suggestions for pre-arranged signals to be given imperceptibly for the arrest of the whole Parliament, or of certain members, in case they attempted to leave the room ; and many other things, for unless everything is arranged beforehand as far as possible an assembly of this sort may be thrown into sudden confusion by some unforeseen incident.

I had not time to remain with them to the end, for the difficulty about the high seats weighed on my mind, and I was determined to deprive the Duke of Orleans of this pretext. I went to Fontanieu's house, where I had asked him to wait for me, and by planning and contriving we managed to arrange for the high seats to have three good steps leading up to them. He was much put out at the postponement of the *lit-de-justice*, for he was afraid his carpenters would talk ; they could not make out what their work was for, and were becoming very inquisitive.

On leaving his house I gave the word "home" to my coachman, but as we passed the Tuileries gardens I pulled

the check-string and got out, as if enticed by the fineness of the evening, ordering my carriage to await me at the end of the Pont-Royal. I soon found M. le Duc at our appointed place; as it was the second time we had met there I was afraid we might be noticed, so I asked him to take off his blue ribbon, which he put into his pocket. He had seen the Duke of Orleans since my interview with him in the morning, and I soon perceived that he had found him in a more yielding mood. I was sorry for it, for I felt that I should not overcome his obstinacy now that he saw a prospect of obtaining what he wanted. In fact, during the early part of our conversation he returned more than once to the subject of the Regent's repeated failures to keep his promises, and declared more emphatically than before that his future conduct towards him would depend entirely on whether the King's education was, or was not, entrusted to him next Friday.

Seeing that it was useless to argue the point any further, I thought of a compromise which I thought might satisfy him. "I see, sir, how the matter stands," I said; "you decline to trust the Regent's word any longer, and are determined to make the most of the present opportunity, and you are quite right; but at the same time you admit that you realise the danger of striking a blow at M. du Maine at the very meeting which will give such mortal offence to the Parliament; and that, if you had not been so often deceived by the Regent, you would not insist on claiming the education at this crisis?" "That is true," he said. "I wish the two affairs could be treated separately; but, as matters stand, what security have I? It would be silly indeed of me to trust to promises any longer!"

I said I thought it would be sufficient security if the Duke of Orleans wrote him a letter in his own hand, promising to give him the charge of the education immediately after the *lit-de-justice*, because, if the promise were not kept, he had only to show the letter to M. du Maine; the Regent would never risk a quarrel with himself and the bastards at the same time. "Sir," replied M. le Duc firmly, "I trust no more in the written promises of the Duke of Orleans than I do in his verbal ones. He has deceived me too often; I will not be taken in again."

I then tried a different line of argument. I said it was not enough to decide that he should have the education, it

was necessary to go into details; before a change of such importance could be carried out it must be mentioned to the Council of Regency, and, though no one knew better than I how contemptible that Council had become, he must expect some opposition. The bastards themselves were members of it; so were Marshals Tallard, Huxelles, and Besons, who, with d'Effiat, belonged to their party; Marshal de Villeroy was quite capable of taking the lead in opposition, with pathetic references to the dying wishes of the late King, and if he did so the others would certainly back him up; even Marshal Villars, formerly M. du Maine's bitter enemy, had, I said, become reconciled to him, not so much by his own advances as because M. le Duc himself always treated him so rudely. Here M. le Duc interrupted me by saying that he was right to treat Marshal Villars so, and said in a contemptuous tone that he must be a poor creature to remain at the head of the Council for War after all the affronts he had received.

"Treat him with as much contempt as you please, sir," I said. "No one knows better than I how little claim he has to good birth, and no one felt more keenly what a degradation it was to us when he was created a Duke and Peer; I feel quite ill with shame and vexation. But, after all, he is the only man in France who has gained battles, or, to put it more strictly, who has not lost any; he has the credit, by good luck it is true, of having saved France by a victory at Denain at a time when she seemed to be at the mercy of her enemies; he also set the final seal to the Treaty of Utrecht by his treaties of Rastadt and Baden. He is, therefore, the most vainglorious of men, and with some justification; if you will allow me to say so, it is very unwise of you to be perpetually attacking a man like that, and you see what comes of it. He is mad with rage and ready to fly at anybody; he has joined M. du Maine, and so, for this whim of yours, you have not only made an enemy of him yourself, but you have set him against the Regent. Now, though he understands nothing about business, he is bold and eloquent; and if he chooses to speak in opposition do you think he will produce no effect on the Council? Marshal d'Huxelles will support him in fewer words, but they will carry weight. The bastards themselves will probably be there; if they also speak, consider what a scene there will be. Do you think the Duke of Orleans will be able to

carry his point? I am afraid you do not realise how weak he is."

"I had not thought of this difficulty," said M. le Duc, "and certainly it is very embarrassing. But it seems to me that we can get over it by not mentioning the question of the education to the Council of Regency; that of the measures to be taken about the Parliament must of course be discussed, but let us say nothing about the other till the *lit-de-justice* is assembled; our secret will be all the better kept."

"That would be all very well, sir," I said, "if no member of the Council was to be present at the *lit-de-justice*; but consider that, with three or four exceptions, they will all take part in the proceedings. What will they say when an affair of such importance as a change in the person responsible for the King's education is sprung suddenly upon them directly after a Council meeting at which not a word had been said about it? You know that the Regent solemnly promised to consult the Council of Regency about all public affairs, and that the Parliament makes the secrecy about what goes on in the Council an excuse for its own proceedings. What will be the effect if Marshal de Villeroy, starting from his seat near the King's person, declares that all this is quite new to him? if Marshal Villars begins a harangue, and the other Marshals, who are all friendly to the bastards, join in the clamour? And suppose that, alarmed by the noise or by some malicious insinuation on the part of Marshal de Villeroy, the King were to begin to cry, and declare that he wishes to keep M. du Maine, what would come of it all? I implore you, sir, as a Frenchman and as a possible heir to the throne, do not allow your hatred of M. du Maine to carry you too far; do not run the risk of making your country a prey to internal dissensions and civil war!"

After a few moments of silence he said these difficulties had not occurred to him, and we must find some way of getting over them; as for civil war, however, he believed there was no danger of it at the present time. There was something else which he thought he should do no harm in mentioning to me, although the Duke of Orleans had told it him under a promise of secrecy; and he then proceeded to tell me what had passed between the Count de Toulouse and the Regent; adding that the Count's plain statement

that he could not answer for his brother had shown the Duke of Orleans clearly what he had to expect from M. du Maine. I replied that this conversation, of which I was already aware, was no doubt very important, but it had no bearing on the difficulties which I had just suggested; it only proved how right I had been when I counselled the reduction of the bastards to their proper rank immediately after the King's death.

"No doubt, sir," said M. le Duc hastily, "you were quite right then, but excuse my saying that you are equally wrong now. Your arguments go to prove that the Regent and I are to sit quiet while the bastards make all their arrangements for cutting our throats. The longer the King's education is left in its present hands, the more powerful M. du Maine's position will become; the King is growing, and as his consciousness of his position increases our own will become doubly dangerous; he will be unwilling to part with M. du Maine, and his mind will be open to receive any impressions which he chooses to convey. Now if the Duke of Orleans chooses to risk what may happen in four years when the King attains his majority, I am not disposed to take matters so easily. Perhaps he considers his position so assured that he has nothing to fear from the bastards; perhaps he fancies that they will be grateful to him for not crushing them, in which I think he will find himself mistaken; but these considerations do not affect me. I repeat, I demand that the King's education should be entrusted to me on Friday. If it is, I shall henceforth make common cause with the Duke of Orleans, and we will see what the bastards can do against the Princes of the Blood united; if not, I shall feel a lasting resentment against him, and I would not move the little distance which now separates us to serve him. I know my position is very inferior to his; but, after all, it is for him to say whether he cares to have me as an ally. He is the Regent; it ought to be in his power to decide on a course which is not only just and reasonable, but to his own interest. It is for him to assert his will, and, if there are difficulties, to find out how they may be got over; if he is incapable of that, it is hardly worth while to be on his side."

I was about to reply after a moment's pause, when he began again. "I must apologise, sir," he said in a gentle, conciliatory tone, "for speaking so firmly; I am afraid

you will think me a very obstinate, pig-headed person. I should be sorry if you conceived so bad an opinion of me; but put yourself in my place, consider my position, and how often the Duke of Orleans has broken his word to me. I ask you, as a friend, would you advise me to ruin my future prospects, and do you see the least probability of M. du Maine ever being removed from about the King's person, if we miss this opportunity? It is that which makes me so firm; if you think the matter over, you will admit that my obstinacy, as you may consider it, arises from a sense of self-preservation."

After this declaration I saw that further argument was useless. My conscience was at ease; I had honestly done my best, in what I considered the interest of the State, to dissuade M. le Duc from his purpose of attacking M. du Maine; having failed in this, I thought myself at liberty to see whether I could not, at any rate, gain some advantage for the peers. I told M. le Duc that, seeing his mind was quite made up, I would not waste his time by repeating the same arguments; I was sorry for his decision, but as there was no help for it I sincerely wished him success; before we parted, however, I should be glad if he would tell me what he thought about reducing the bastards to their proper rank among the peers. He said he consented to it willingly, and reminded me that the reduction was provided for in one of the three draft edicts which he had submitted to the Duke of Orleans.

"Yes, sir," I said, "but to raise no objection to a measure is not quite the same thing as wishing for it earnestly. Permit me to speak freely; at the time of your dispute with the bastards you thought it advisable to retain an intermediate rank between the Princes of the Blood and the Dukes, and it is owing to this that the bastards are still legitimated Princes. You were betrayed throughout that affair by persons in the pay of M. du Maine, whom you believed with some reason to be devoted to your interests."

"I can tell you who it was," interrupted M. le Duc; "it was Lassé who deceived us all along."

"Since you name him, sir," I said, "name both the Lassés, father and son; everybody knew it, except yourself. I am glad to see that your eyes are opened. You made a great mistake in preferring the interests of the bastards to ours; if they had been reduced to their proper rank there

would have been no difficulty in depriving M. du Maine of the education; even Marshal de Villeroy would have protested against serving under him when he was no longer a Prince of the Blood. You incurred the resentment of all the Dukes, including some devoted to the House of Condé by family traditions dating from the time of the civil wars; when I say all I mean all who have any sense of self-respect; for I do not talk of such wretches as the Dukes d'Estrées, Mazarin, and d'Aumont. Your position, sir, as Prince of the Blood is highly exalted, and in the present circumstances your personal influence is very great; yet the support or opposition of the great body of the peers cannot be altogether a matter of indifference to you. Take this opportunity of gaining their devotion, and repair the wrong you did them in the past; for I will not conceal from you that the Duke of Orleans told them plainly that, but for your opposition, he would have decided their petition at the same time as yours, and reduced the bastards to their rank among the peers; and that is why there is such a strong feeling against you."

M. le Duc remained silent for a moment, and then said he should like me to see the three draft edicts which he had submitted to the Duke of Orleans. The person who drew them up was well known to me, and would be glad to talk over the subject; it was Millain, formerly secretary to the Chancellor Pontchartrain, a very capable and honest man, in whom he had the greatest confidence. I was glad to hear this; Millain was, in fact, a very upright, sensible person; I had taken a great liking to him when he was with the Chancellor, and had remained on friendly terms with him, though, since his master's retirement, I had not so many opportunities of seeing him. I thought there could not be a better man to act as intermediary between M. le Duc and myself, and agreed that he should come to my house next morning with the drafts.

That matter being settled (and it seemed to me that my ready compliance pleased M. le Duc) I thought it as well to come to a more definite understanding with him. Apologising for the liberty I took, I told him that seeing his persistence in claiming the education, I had already suspected that we should not induce him to give way on that point. I had therefore sounded the Regent that morning about the reduction of the bastards, and he had replied that the

question depended more on M. le Duc than himself; that he doubted whether he would approve; but, if he did so, and made a formal request to that effect, he would consent willingly, for he thought the reduction was not only fair but very desirable.

"Now, sir," I continued in a tone of great respect, "you see that our fate is in your hands; do not you think it would be worth your while to secure the adhesion of a body consisting of the most influential men in the kingdom? They are now full of resentment not only against you, but also against the Regent, on account of the affair of the cap; you have it in your power to change all this. If the Peers go to the *lit-de-justice* knowing beforehand that, owing to your intercession and the equity of the Regent, they are about to obtain the fulfilment of the dearest wish of their hearts, you may count on their unanimous support if it comes to a debate; and you may depend on it that the voice of that bench will carry great weight in an assembly of that kind."

Then, changing my tone and speaking with greater warmth and energy, I added: "Put yourself in our place, sir; how would you feel towards a man who has it in his power to relieve you from an unmerited disgrace, and who chooses to leave you to it? I will not deceive you: I owe it to my colleagues to tell them all that has passed, and to let them know that they will owe their continued ignominy or the restoration of their honour to you alone. Though there is a far greater distance between the peers and you than between the Duke of Orleans and yourself, forgive me if I use your own expressions when speaking of him: if you abandon us, I shall feel a lasting resentment against you, which will be shared by all those of my dignity; we shall continue to treat you with the respect due to your position, but we will not take a step to serve you. On the contrary, if you put the bastards in their proper place, and restore to us the honours which are our due, I for one can assure you of my lifelong devotion, to which I assign no limits, because I know you to be incapable of undertaking anything against the King, the State, or the Regent; I will, moreover, bring all the peers of France to the Hôtel de Condé, promising you their influence and that of their families. Ponder these things, sir; there are two courses open to you, I have told you what the consequences will be, so far as we are concerned,

of adopting either ; weigh them carefully against each other ; consider which is likely to cost you dearest, and then make your choice between them ! "

After this vigorous address I stopped short, regretting that, owing to the darkness, M. le Duc was unable to see the fire which flashed from my eyes, while I was prevented from judging by his face what impression I had made upon him. He replied instantly, in these very words : " Sir," he said, " I have always felt the highest esteem for the peerage as a body, and for most of the individuals who compose it. I know well what a difference their friendship would make to me instead of their neutrality, not to speak of their enmity. I have already admitted that I made a mistake with regard to them, and I should like to set it right ; I admit, moreover, that it is only just that there should be no intermediate rank between them and ourselves. But are you sure that the Duke of Orleans is speaking sincerely when he tells you that he consents to the reduction of the bastards if I ask for it ? for I do not wish to be made responsible for his sins ! "

" That is my business, sir," I replied ; " yours is to choose, clearly and distinctly. Will you accept our services on the conditions I have mentioned, or do you consider the price too high to pay ? "

" I accept willingly," he said, " so far as I am concerned ; but is it enough if I do my best, or does the result depend on my success ? "

" I cannot admit that distinction, sir," I replied hastily ; " success is in your hands ; you have only to demand the reduction with the same force and obstinacy as you have shown in the matter of the education. Do not separate the two things, insist equally on both, and I will guarantee that you succeed. If the Duke of Orleans grants you the more important of your demands, he cannot refuse the other, which is simply the decision of a long-standing dispute in the manner which you have both admitted to be just and equitable."

" Very good, sir," said M. le Duc ; " I pledge you my word that I will make both demands to-morrow, and insist equally on both ; but I hope you also will promise to do your best."

" Not quite so fast, sir," I said. " All I can promise with regard to M. du Maine is to do as I have done hitherto : to point out to the Duke of Orleans the reasons for and against meddling with him. But if he thinks fit to accede

to your request, then I promise you I will go into the business heart and soul, and do my utmost to ensure success." On this we embraced, with mutual protestations of friendship, and then returned to the question of the mechanical difficulties.

I told him I thought we ought to make a distinction between the two brothers, and for the public good I was willing to make a sacrifice by allowing the Count de Toulouse to retain his present rank. M. le Duc asked in some surprise why I thought so, and how I proposed to arrange it.

"I cannot help fearing, sir," I said, "that, on an occasion like this, the Count de Toulouse may make common cause with his brother, whose party would be immensely strengthened by his adhesion. My idea is to sow dissension between the brothers, and at the same time range public opinion on our side, by making an exception in favour of the Count de Toulouse."

"With all my heart!" cried M. le Duc. "You know how fond I am of him; and, if you do not object, certainly I am quite willing that he should remain as he is. But shall we gain anything by it?"

"I think so," I replied; "I will explain what I mean, and then you can judge for yourself. I suggest that the edict reducing both bastards to their proper rank among the peers should be followed immediately by a second, reinstating the Count de Toulouse in the rank he now enjoys, but making it quite clear that it is a personal favour to himself, and does not extend to any children he may have. He will then have to decide, without much time for deliberation, whether he will accept this flattering distinction or cast in his lot with M. du Maine. He will certainly think twice before he sacrifices a high position for the sake of a brother whom he has never loved or respected, and devotes himself to the caprices of a sister-in-law whom he detests as a madwoman, as the person who has pushed her husband on from plot to plot till, having begun with simple ingratitude, he seems likely to end in open rebellion. If the Count does refuse the proffered honour, his own friends will be the first to blame him, and he can be treated on exactly the same footing as his brother without fear of shocking public opinion. If, on the other hand, he accepts, there is nothing to be feared from him; he cannot agitate against the Government without dishonouring himself; and our minds will be at ease

with regard to Brittany and to what remains of the Navy. Moreover, his acceptance will cause a deadly breach between him and his brother; Madame du Maine especially will never forgive him a distinction so offensive to them; and public opinion, which is favourable to the Count de Toulouse, will turn against their cabal. This is what I suggest; it is a proposal contrary to my personal interests as a Duke and Peer, but I make it in the interests of the State, and partly also for the sake of a man whose private character I admire. What do you think of it, sir?"

"I approve of it highly," said M. le Duc: "it satisfies my personal friendship for the Count de Toulouse, and it will, I think, place him in an embarrassing position. If he refuses, it is his own doing, and public opinion will not be on his side; if he accepts, we have got what we want. I think now that he will accept, but I confess my first impression was the other way."

"It would be madness for him to refuse, sir," I said; "but there are plenty of people about him who would lose too much by a refusal, and who will use all their influence to make him accept."

"I am glad to think so," said he, "and I will set Millain to work at a draft edict for this purpose."

"I will talk the matter over with him to-morrow," I replied; "but I will draw up another draft myself, for I should like it to be said that the peers themselves arranged this sacrifice of their own rank for the good of the State." M. le Duc highly approved of this suggestion, which, he said was disinterested to a very uncommon degree.

He then returned to the subject of the practical difficulties which I had suggested. I said that, now he had promised to help us in the matter of our rank, I thought I could assure him of the support of all the peers at the *lit-de-justice*; for even the Duke de Villeroy (at the express request of his father the Marshal) and Marshal Villars had signed the petition against the bastards which we had presented to the King and the Regent; and these signatures would embarrass them considerably if they tried to help M. du Maine. I doubted whether the other Marshals would give any trouble without their support; but the two most knotty points to decide were, whether to mention the edicts concerning the bastards in the Council of Regency, or not; and, secondly, what course to adopt if the bastards were present

at the meeting of the Council, or at the *lit-de-justice*. We came to the conclusion that it would be safest to say nothing about the edicts in the Council if the bastards were there; if they were present at the *lit-de-justice*, the Regent must stand firm and carry the business through with a high hand. I asked M. le Duc to mention these matters to the Duke of Orleans, and try to find out how far we could depend upon his resolution, for upon that the whole success of this important affair would depend.

When we parted M. le Duc again gave me his word to make a personal affair of the reduction of the bastards, with many flattering expressions. He begged me to see the Regent next morning, and, though I told him again plainly that I would not plead his cause in the matter of the education, he did me the honour of embracing me. It was now very late; I did not escort him through the gardens, for fear of being noticed, but made the best of my way home; very hopeful of the restoration of our rank, but anxious about the consequences of the cast of the dice on which so much was to be hazarded.

CHAPTER VII

1718

I interview Millain—The Regent agrees that the peers shall be informed of the proposed edict relating to the bastards—I again entreat his firmness—I receive warning of a plot by M. du Maine from the Duke d'Humières and warn the Regent—Postponement of arrest of members of Parliament—Further plans for the morrow—We agree no hint shall be given to the bastards at the Council of the edict—The meeting of the *lit-de-justice* to be held with open doors—I ask permission to confide in the Duke de Chaulnes—The Duke of Orleans complains of indisposition—Contade and the Swiss Guards.

Wednesday, 24th of August.—Next morning Millain came punctually at half-past eight, the hour appointed, and we greeted each other with the cordiality of old acquaintances. He said M. le Duc had informed him of the substance of our conversations, and wished him to tell me that his agitation had prevented him from closing his eyes all night; that, nevertheless, his mind was fully made up and he would keep his word about our rank. Millain then showed me the drafts of the three alternative edicts: the first dealing only with the change in the superintendence of the King's education; the second establishing an intermediate rank; the third reducing the bastards to their rank among the peers, and revoking all previous edicts in their favour. I paid little attention to the second, which revived painful feelings; the others appeared to be drawn correctly, especially the third, which was in exact conformity with my wishes. I told Millain he must draw up another reinstating the Count de Toulouse; adding that I also would prepare one to the same effect, and if he would call at the same hour next day we would compare the two, and see which we liked best. I begged him to keep M. le Duc up to the mark with regard to our claims; and we parted after a rather long consultation.

I then went straight to the Palais-Royal, where the Regent was expecting me; he locked his doors, and we

walked up and down the great gallery. I saw at once that he had made up his mind to entrust the King's education to M. le Duc, so I thought it useless to contest the point any longer. I contented myself with begging him to remember that, laying aside my personal feelings and my desire for vengeance, I had earnestly tried to dissuade him and M. le Duc from meddling with M. du Maine on this occasion, because I thought that to attack him and the Parliament together would be dangerous to the peace of the State. I then suggested the reduction of the bastards to their proper rank, and in the conversation which followed I could not refrain from reminding the Regent of his shabby treatment of us in the affair of the cap and other matters. By way of excuse, he alleged the opposition of the nobility; I told him, with an indignation which I could not suppress, that he himself had been the cause of the ferment among the nobility; adding that I thought he had no reason to congratulate himself on the result. I said it mattered nothing to the nobility whether the peers took precedence of M. du Maine or the contrary; if we had failed in obtaining our rights it was owing entirely to his own ill-will towards us.

By degrees I brought him to admit that our demand was just, and that the nobility had nothing to say in the matter; but he objected the hostility of M. le Duc. This was where I was waiting for him; I said if that was his only objection I could tell him that M. le Duc was more alive than himself to the advantage of having the peers as friends: he was aware that His Royal Highness had kindly thrown all the responsibility upon him, and that he had, in consequence, incurred the resentment of the peers; but he was determined to repair the mischief he had done, and intended to demand formally that the bastards should henceforth take precedence according to the seniority of their peerages. We should now see, I added, how far His Royal Highness would carry his ill-will towards us; his treatment of us had aroused feelings which in my case had been overcome, greatly to my own astonishment, by the recollection of thirty years of friendly intercourse; but he must not suppose that the other peers, who had not the same personal reasons, felt as I did; and he would do well to try and regain them.

After this piece of plain speaking I remained silent, to see from his face what effect it had produced. He stood

with downcast eyes, thoughtful and dejected, as if wavering between remorse and his natural indecision: I would not press him for an answer; I wished to give him time to realise my feelings of contemptuous indignation, which I thought would make a greater impression than another vehement outpouring of words. Nevertheless, seeing that he still remained moody and taciturn, I said: "Well, sir, are you still going to trample us underfoot, even against the wishes of M. le Duc?" He smiled, and said in a conciliatory way that he had no desire to do so; he would see whether M. le Duc really wished the bastards to be reduced, in which case he would do it. "I have no fear on that score, sir," I said. "You will hear what M. le Duc has to say. But will you really do it?" "Certainly," he replied. "I tell you I wish it, and would have done it before but for his opposition; I will do it now, if he insists on it."

I thought this looked rather as though he was providing himself with a pretext for backing out of his promise, but I would not press him further; I merely remarked that it would be greatly to his own interest to put the bastards in their proper place, and then turned to the subject of the Count de Toulouse. I explained my reasons for thinking it advisable to make an exception in his favour, and the manner in which I proposed to do it. The Duke of Orleans highly approved of them; not only because they were good in themselves, but because my plan would make his task much easier.

We then discussed the practical difficulties which I had suggested to M. le Duc; they had not previously occurred to the Regent. We agreed that if he could reckon on the support of the peers in the *lit-de-justice* it would be better not to mention the subject of the bastards at the Council-meeting. I could not refrain from pointing out that the help of the peers was not always to be despised, and suggested that I should be authorised to tell them beforehand of the justice which was to be rendered to them. He agreed to this. Then we spoke of the really essential part of the whole business, namely, the firmness he would have to show if confronted with the presence of the two bastards in the *lit-de-justice*, and if any opposition should be raised by themselves or their adherents. He promised to do wonders; but said he hoped the brothers would not be present, because since his decision in the dispute between them and the

Princes of the Blood they had declined to attend the Parliament, as not acknowledging the justice of his decree. I said he had better not trust to that on such an occasion; but he was always of a sanguine disposition, and continued to hope for their absence.

I told him he must make up his mind to act his own part and carry it through with resolution, for upon the result of this *lit-de-justice* depended the whole of his authority in France, and his influence and consideration abroad. He said he was quite conscious of it, and promised to do wonders; but, for all that, I felt no great confidence in him. I begged him to remember how feebly he had resisted M. du Maine's insolent demands at the meeting of the Parliament which confirmed his Regency, when everything was in his favour, and how he would certainly have yielded to them if I had not contrived to induce him to adjourn the sitting till the afternoon, and so given him time for consideration. I reminded him that it would require all his firmness to encounter M. du Maine now, when he felt his own strength and was backed up by an angry Parliament. He admitted the truth of what I said; tried to excuse himself by pleading the novelty of his situation; and promised for this occasion rather more, I fancy, than what he really thought himself capable of performing.

Turning to another subject, he told me that the Abbé Dubois was in conference with the Keeper of the Seals, and had drawn up a list of all the difficulties likely to be made by the Parliament; adding that he wished me to consult those in the secret with regard to this matter. He did not forget to inquire whether I had contrived to remedy the want of elevation of the high benches, and was far from satisfied with the three steps which they were to have; I have never been able to understand what put this crotchet into his head. Before we parted I said a few more words about the reduction of the bastards, and he renewed his promise; but my distrust of him was so strong that I said, raising my voice: "I do not believe, sir, that you will do anything of the sort, and you will be sorry for it all the rest of your life; just as you are now sorry that you did not overthrow the bastards immediately after the King's death!" He was just opening the door into his large private room; I made my escape another way, and went home to dinner.

Just as I had finished dinner I received warning of a plot

concocted by M. du Maine and some leading members of the Parliament to declare the King of age, and to nominate a Council consisting of M. du Maine's confidants, with himself as chief. Such a project seemed to me to be hardly worthy of notice, being directly opposed to the law, as well as to custom and common sense. But, considering the underhand ways of those people, their hatred for the Regent and contempt for his weakness, the terror of M. du Maine and his wife's extraordinary audacity, their intrigues with Cellamare, the Spanish Ambassador, and Cardinal Alberoni; considering, also, what the Count de Toulouse had said so recently to the Duke of Orleans about his brother, I thought there might possibly be something in it; and I wrote a note to the Regent, telling him what I had heard.

I spent the afternoon at my own house with the Duke d'Humières and Louville, my doors being strictly closed to any one not in our secret. Between four and five I was told that M. le Duc had just left my door, where he had vainly sought admission, and that he had gone to the Duke de la Force's house, close by. I sent a message there at once, explaining that I had not expected the honour of a visit from him, and asking if he would be kind enough to return. He arrived almost immediately. I made my apologies to him, explaining that I had given orders that no one should be admitted except those in the secret and two or three intimate friends who were in the habit of coming, and whom I did not like to exclude for fear of making my servants talk; as it had never occurred to me that he might come, I had not put his name on the list of exceptions.

I then asked what news he brought. He told me, with all the politeness of a private person, that he came to tell me the result of his interview with the Regent; he had asked for the reduction of the bastards, and hoped there would be no difficulty about it. He said he was also requested by His Royal Highness to find out from me all that I knew of the matter about which I had written to him. I said he could not have arrived more opportunely, for all I knew about it was derived from the Duke d'Humières, who was now in the house; I had asked him and Louville to go into another room when M. le Duc was announced. I went for him, and he told M. le Duc that M. de Boulainvilliers had heard some members of the Parliament discussing the project, and had warned him at once. I said

the Duke of Orleans had better send for Boulainvilliers and hear all about it at first hand. M. le Duc then returned to the Palais-Royal. I was very glad to hear what he had done on behalf of our rank, but still doubtful as to whether he had insisted sufficiently.

M. de la Force arrived soon afterwards. I had obtained the Regent's permission to tell him about the reduction of the bastards, because I wanted his assistance in drawing up the declaration concerning the Count de Toulouse; and I did so now. I do not know whether he was more astonished or delighted at the prospect of such an unexpected event. I begged him to set to work on the declaration in favour of the Count de Toulouse, and to make it clear that the restoration of rank was for himself alone and did not extend to any children he might have; I also asked M. de la Force to insert a clause declaring that the restoration was made with the consent of the Princes of the Blood and at the request of the peers, so that our rights should be fully safeguarded. He went away to see about it; and I passed the rest of the day in consultation with Law, Fagon, and the Abbé Dubois.

Law had returned to his own house; and the Parliament, surprised and rather alarmed at the silence which had followed the decision of the Council of Regency to annul its edicts, instead of sending officers to arrest him and lead him to execution, had sent some of its members to confer with him and to make apologies on behalf of Blamont, president of one of the courts. That very morning the Duke d'Aumont had called upon him, with overtures for a reconciliation between the Parliament and the Regent. Law repeated to us some very absurd things which the Duke d'Aumont had said; showing how rapidly insolence had given place to fear, and how easily a little firmness might have prevented the whole trouble, and might still stop it. The Abbé Dubois told me that Marshal de Villeroy had been to see him, in a mortal fright of being arrested; full of explanations and apologies, and talking loudly of his attachment to the late Monsieur, and so on. From all this I came to the conclusion that these people were not yet ready for action, that we should take them by surprise, and that vigorous blows aimed simultaneously at the Parliament and at that execrable bastard would ensure order and tranquillity for the remainder of the Regency.

It had been determined to arrest certain members of the Parliament on the Friday morning and send them into rigorous captivity in distant places; but while we were discussing the business it occurred to me that the postponement of the *lit-de-justice* from Tuesday to Saturday had altered the circumstances, and that it would be unwise to make the arrests on the very morning when the *lit-de-justice* was to take place; the Parliament, hearing of them, might either refuse to attend, or interrupt the proceedings by making inconvenient remonstrances. We therefore thought it would be better to put off the arrests till Saturday morning, when we could regulate our proceedings according to the result of the *lit-de-justice*. I undertook to represent this to the Duke of Orleans, and wrote him a note asking for an interview next morning. I then retired, thoroughly exhausted by so much planning, and by the alternative between hope and the misgivings aroused by the character of the Regent.

Thursday, 25th of August.—Early next morning the Duke de la Force brought me the declaration in favour of the Count de Toulouse; it was quite satisfactory and required no alteration. Shortly afterwards, Millain came in; he hesitated when he saw M. de la Force, but I told him he was now in all our secrets, so we talked over the great event of the morrow. Millain said the Duke of Orleans wished me to go to the Palais-Royal that evening, by the little door, to discuss the final arrangements with him and M. le Duc; and he hoped I would allow him to accompany me, so that he might be at hand in case he was wanted to advise about ceremonial matters. I asked him whether he knew M. le Duc's real sentiments about the restitution of our precedence over the bastards, for I did not feel quite satisfied with what he had said to me the evening before. As Millain could tell me nothing further, I thought it would be as well to repeat to him the arguments which I had previously used with M. le Duc, to which he listened with approval.

I wound up by saying, with all the force I could muster: "You have heard what I have to say; I speak in the name of all the peers of France, who feel as strongly on the subject as I do. Repeat my words to M. le Duc; tell him that I know from the Duke of Orleans, and every peer in France shall know it from me, that our fate is in his hands, and to-morrow will show whether he chooses to support us or

not. If he throws us over, I feel myself capable of joining even with M. du Maine against him, and so will the other peers; for, though M. du Maine has done us great harm he, at any rate, had an object in it—he has gained great advantages for himself. But M. le Duc will have no such excuse; there can be no question of rivalry between him and us; if he opposes us, it will be a purely gratuitous injury, and there is nothing we will not do to make him feel our resentment. If, on the other hand, he takes our side against his own personal enemy, if he helps us to regain our proper position, I cannot find words to express how heartily we will devote ourselves to his service. You understand what I mean—I beg that you will repeat to him what I have said, word for word; and I hope you will come back and tell us clearly how far we may depend upon him."

M. de la Force seemed rather startled at this vigorous declaration, and did not do much to back me up. I had no time to listen to Millain's protests, for a servant whom I had sent to the Palais-Royal came back saying that the Duke of Orleans was waiting for me. I finished dressing as quickly as I could, and went off to the Palais-Royal.

Ibagnet, who was expecting me, introduced me by the side-entrance; but, as he was opening the secret door leading to the private room, Serre, one of the Duchess of Orleans' equerries, came down the stairs and looked very much astonished to see me there. I was rather put out at this meeting; but fortunately the Duchess was at St. Cloud, and I consoled myself by the reflection that our troubles would be over in twenty-four hours. The Regent was busy with La Vrillière when I went in: the latter rose to retire, but I stopped him and told the Regent that there was a matter which I should like to mention in his presence. It was the question of the arrest of certain members of the Parliament, and the Regent agreed that it would be wise to postpone it till the following morning. I was only just in time, for La Vrillière was about to issue the necessary orders, which he put off doing till next day. The Regent said the matter had occurred to himself during the night, which he had passed in a rather feverish condition. I was alarmed at hearing of this indisposition, which I feared might disconcert all our plans. La Vrillière then took his leave, and I walked up and down the great gallery with the Duke of Orleans.

He spoke first of the rumoured plot which I had written to him about, and said he was sure there was nothing in it. Then we turned to the great affair of the next day ; I reminded him that he had forgotten to countermand the Council-meeting appointed for this afternoon, and he gave orders for it at once, fixing it for the afternoon of next day ; this was to throw dust in people's eyes and conceal our designs, and it had the desired effect.

But the two principal difficulties remained : were the measures affecting the bastards to be mentioned in the Council, and what was to be done if, as was very possible, they were present at the *lit-de-justice* ? An idea occurred to me as a partial solution ; it was to hold the *lit-de-justice* with " open doors," because in that case the Keeper of the Seals walks along the benches and collects the votes of the members, which are given in a low voice ; this would enable him to report the result of the voting as he pleased ; moreover, it would close the mouth of any member not bold enough to take the unusual course of insisting on speaking openly, and it would be a very impudent man who would venture to give his vote aloud, contrary to all custom, in the presence of the King and surrounded by his guards in his own palace. We were sure of the Keeper of the Seals, so if this method were adopted we had nothing to fear from the votes of the timid Council of Regency ; nor even from the Parliament. Still, the presence of the bastards would be an embarrassment for the Regent ; there was nothing for it but to rely on his firmness and resolution, in which I confess I felt little confidence. However, he promised to do wonders ; and I must say that when the time came his performance was even better than his promises.

While we were discussing these matters M. le Duc came in ; and we arranged the programme for next day, which need not be mentioned here because I shall relate the proceedings in detail. I took the liberty of calling them both to witness that I had from the first opposed the project of depriving M. du Maine of the superintendence of the King's education ; I said I was still of the same opinion, but since the question had been decided against me I hoped they would forgive me if I entreated them to maintain a close and intimate union between themselves, for on that would depend not only the discomfiture of their common enemies, but their own tranquillity and the welfare of the State.

Such a union, I added, could only be maintained by turning a deaf ear to the suspicions aroused by the rascals who would certainly do their best to sow dissension between them. This was received by M. le Duc with all sorts of protestations of his gratitude and friendship, and, on the part of the Duke of Orleans, with the most polite and engaging expressions. I then took my leave, hoping for resolution in the one, for fidelity in the other, and for a good issue to the great blows which were to fall in rapid succession on the morrow. As I was going out they called me back to remind me not to forget my appointment for that evening.

I returned home more at ease and more satisfied than I had been for some time. Our business seemed to be arranged, and all mishaps foreseen and provided for so far as was possible ; the Regent was taking courage ; the secret had been well kept, and the decisive moment was rapidly approaching ; satisfied with having honestly done my best to save M. du Maine in what I conceived to be the interest of the State, I thought myself free to rejoice in the decision which had been come to in spite of my opposition, and still more in the fruit I expected from it. Freed from anxiety about more important matters, I gave myself up to the delicious thought that I was the means of obtaining for the peers of France a restitution of rank which their united efforts had been unable to procure, and which was about to be announced in their presence, without their knowing anything beforehand. These delightful meditations occupied me for nearly two hours ; yet I could not indulge in them without restraint till I had received a positive promise on the subject of the bastards.

While I was thus absorbed in thought Millain arrived ; he said he was sent by M. le Duc to inform me that the Regent had definitely consented to the reduction of the bastards to their proper rank among the peers ; the declaration to that effect had been sent to La Vrillière and the Keeper of the Seals, together with that exempting the Count de Toulouse, to be put into proper shape ; and he would answer for it that the business would be satisfactorily settled on the morrow. A cordial embrace was my reply, and no kiss given by a lover to a beautiful mistress was ever sweeter than that which I implanted on the fat old cheek of this charming messenger.

But in the midst of my transports I did not lose my

presence of mind; I reminded Millain that my friend La Vrillière and the Keeper of the Seals were both imbued with the sentiments of the old court, and that the latter especially had always been on friendly terms with the bastards. I said I must beg M. le Duc to crown his work by one more service; I hoped he would see these two gentlemen and impress upon them that he considered the reduction of the bastards every whit as important and essential as the matter of the King's education. Millain said he felt sure that M. le Duc would raise no objection, adding that he would accompany him in order to make sure that no alteration had been made in the two declarations. I renewed my hearty thanks to M. le Duc and to himself; impressed upon him the importance of finding these two men at home; and then dismissed him in order that no time might be lost.

I spent the remainder of the day with the Abbé Dubois, Fagon, and the Duke de la Force, putting the final touches to our arrangements. Everything was foreseen and provided for: if the Parliament refused to come to the Tuileries the documents necessary for suspending them from their functions were ready drawn up, all pending lawsuits being referred to the Grand Council for decision; *maîtres-des-requêtes* were selected to notify the suspension to the Parliament and affix seals where necessary, and officers with detachments of soldiers were told off to escort them; if the Parliament came and refused to take part in the business, the suspension was still to take place; if the bastards or any nobleman made a fuss they were to be arrested, on the spot if any disturbance arose; if not, when the sitting was over; if they attempted to leave Paris, they were to be pursued and arrested.

The Abbé Dubois drew up a little code of signals for the Regent, such as crossing his legs, waving a handkerchief, and so on; this was to be given in the morning to the officers of the body-guard selected to carry out his instructions, who were to be scattered about among the audience, keeping their eyes on the Regent and ready to obey the slightest signal. In order to spare the Duke of Orleans as much trouble as possible, the Abbé also drew up a time-table for him, marking the hour of the night at which he ought to send for each person to give him the necessary orders, with notes of what he was to say in each case, so that nothing should be done prematurely. This

was very useful, and helped materially to keep the secret till the last moment.

Towards eight o'clock Millain came to accompany me to the Palais-Royal; he said M. le Duc had seen La Vrillière and the Keeper of the Seals, and the two declarations were properly drawn up, signed, and sealed. I thanked him and then asked him to go on by himself and wait for me at the side-door of the Palais-Royal, so as not to make my servants talk; after a few minutes I followed him without links. Ibagnet was waiting for us, and introduced us in the dark, for fear of being seen. I was alarmed at finding the Duke of Orleans in bed; he said he had a fever. I snatched at his wrist to feel his pulse, and found that he was really feverish. I told him it was nothing but fatigue, mental and bodily, and that he would be all right in twenty-four hours; and he declared that, well or ill, he meant to go through with the *lit-de-justice*; I was, however, very uneasy about this fever coming at such an inconvenient time to a man who had hardly had a day's illness in his life.

M. le Duc now came in, and sat down at the head of the bed; no one else, except Millain, was present in the room, which was lighted by a single candle. We again considered the various orders to be given; it was decided that the Parliament should be warned at six in the morning to be in attendance at the Tuileries between nine and ten for a *lit-de-justice*; members of the Council of Regency were also to be warned at seven that the Council summoned for the afternoon would be held at eight, and the chiefs of the other Councils were to be told to bring any urgent business they might have, so that the Council-meeting could be prolonged if necessary. We also decided that the Regent should depart from his usual practice in the Council and take the votes beginning with the senior members; to show that he was acting in concert with the Princes of the Blood and to intimidate any member who might be inclined to make a fuss.

After this, M. le Duc read us what he proposed to say in demanding the education, in which the Regent suggested some slight alterations. It occurred to me that it would be as well to say something flattering about Marshal de Villeroy, and, M. le Duc agreeing, he inserted a passage from my dictation, writing on a dog-kennel which I brought him for want of a portable writing-table.

Then came the great question about the bastards. It was decided that nothing should be said regarding them in the Council, on account of their presence ; and that they should not be warned for the *lit-de-justice* on the pretext that, since the Regent's decision in the dispute between them and the Princes, they had declined attending meetings of the Parliament. The Duke of Orleans hoped this would secure their absence ; he thought, moreover, that, having received no notification, they would not have mantles and bands ready, and therefore would not be able to attend. I told him he was deceiving himself with false hopes, for M. du Maine's rooms were just under the King's apartments ; moreover, the Duke de Villeroy, as Captain of the Guard on duty, slept at the Tuileries, and he must receive notice of the proceedings some time beforehand, as his services could not be dispensed with ; he would certainly warn his father, and M. du Maine through him, so that they would have ample time for consultation, and to obtain the proper dress. The more they were taken by surprise, I said, the more determined the bastards would be to attend the *lit-de-justice* to defend themselves courageously ; all the Duke of Orleans could do would be to confront them firmly, speaking quietly and without anger, but without giving way on a single point, resolute to maintain the royal authority entrusted to him. We discussed various plans for keeping them away, but without result.

I then brought up the question of the reduction of the bastards to their proper rank ; the Regent and M. le Duc both assured me that it would be carried out, and that the necessary documents were already signed and sealed. After thanking them, I suggested that I should be allowed, before the business of the Council began, to tell the other peers what was to be done, as there would then be no possibility of their letting out the secret ; and the Regent agreed that it would be advisable, in order to put them in a good humour. He also approved of my suggestion that I should bring with me the petition of the peers against the bastards, which was signed among others by the Duke de Villeroy by his father's orders, and also by Marshal Villars, whom we all distrusted. I had some reason, when the time came, to think that this precaution was not altogether useless.

We then considered the proper course to pursue in case the Parliament refused to vote in the *lit-de-justice*. My advice

was that if the refusal took the form of a modest silence, the Keeper of the Seals should take no notice, but continue his rounds of the benches as if collecting the votes. This was why I had suggested that the meeting should be held "with open doors," as in that case that is the usual way of taking the votes. If, on the other hand, any member declared openly that he would not vote, or if the First-President uttered a protest on behalf of his colleagues, I advised that the Regent should ignore the refusal, informing them that although the King, to show his respect for the Parliament, condescends to ask its advice, he is in no way bound to do so, nor to act upon the advice given; that he is the master, and all his subjects were bound to obey him; that he had sent for them to hear the declaration of his purpose, which it was their duty to enter submissively on their registers. The Duke of Orleans replied that no doubt that was the proper course to adopt, but all the same he had frequently heard me maintain the contrary, namely, that in a *lit-de-justice*, members are not restricted to merely giving their votes, but have the right to debate the questions submitted to them. I said that was very true, and I was still of the same opinion; but this case was exceptional. I fully explained my reasons for saying so, and could have done so at much greater length had time permitted and had it been necessary; but the Duke of Orleans expressed himself quite satisfied with them, and determined to act upon my advice.

I asked whether anything was to be said during the night to the law-officers of the Crown. The Regent said that they would be warned to behave discreetly, at the time when the Parliament received its notification of the *lit-de-justice*; especially Blancmesnil, Chief Advocate-General, who would be told that all his future prospects depended on his giving a favourable opinion, without ambiguity, on any question submitted to him.

The Duke of Orleans then explained to us in detail all the orders he had to give during the night, up to eight in the morning, when he would go to see the King, wearing his mantle. I begged him to take as much rest as he could, and to remember that the fate of his Regency depended on the events of the next day, on his firmness, presence of mind, and self-possession. With that I bade him good-night, and, retiring from the bed, I thanked M. le Duc for the visits he had paid me, with warm protestations which came from

my heart, whereupon he embraced me twice most affectionately. Before I went out I returned to the bed and asked permission of the Duke of Orleans to confide our secret to the Duke de Chaulnes, since he must learn something of it during the night, when he would receive his orders for the Light-Horse which he commanded. The Duke of Orleans consented at once; I again felt his pulse, and told him his indisposition was not serious, though I cannot say I felt very sure about it. Then I finally took my leave and retired at ten o'clock with Millain, who had remained standing throughout our conference, and had made some very judicious remarks. Ibagnet was waiting for us, and conducted us downstairs in the dark, as we had come up; after a cordial embrace we separated and went on our ways to our respective homes.

I stopped my carriage at the Hôtel de Luynes, which was close to my house, and sent in to ask the Duke de Chaulnes to be good enough to come and speak to me. He came out without his hat, and got into my carriage; whereupon the coachman, who had received his orders, drove off to my house, much to the astonishment of the Duke de Chaulnes, who could not understand why he was carried off in this manner. I said not a word till we reached my own room, and he was still more astonished when I told him of the great scene prepared for next day. We rejoiced together over the re-establishment of our dignity, the prospect of which, distant as it seemed, had been our only consolation under the horrible tyranny of the late King; and over the vengeance about to fall on M. du Maine for his deliberate treachery in the affair of the cap. The good offices of M. le Duc and even of Millain were not forgotten in our conversation, and we parted in joyful anticipation of the morrow.

Some days before I happened to hear that Contade, Major in the Guards, a very trustworthy and intelligent man, was about to go on leave to his home in Anjou. I met him one day at the Palais-Royal, and told him that I begged and advised him to put off his departure quietly. He promised to do so, and to say nothing about it. It was fortunate that I took this precaution. About one o'clock in the morning the Regent sent out orders to the officers commanding the Guards, Musketeers, and other troops; Contade noticed that none had been sent to the Swiss Guards; for there is almost always something forgotten on such occasions. He

went at once to the Duke of Orleans and called his attention to the omission, pointing out that the Swiss would be offended by any mark of distrust, and that, as they were perfectly loyal and, moreover, greatly inferior in numbers to the regiment of Guards, there was nothing to be feared from them. The Regent ordered him to repair the omission, and about four in the morning he went to the Tuileries, to arouse M. du Maine, Colonel-General of the Swiss Guards. M. du Maine had not been in bed an hour, having returned from a great entertainment given by Madame du Maine at the Arsenal. He must have been startled at being awakened so abruptly, but he restrained his emotions, and Contade heard him ask, in a tolerably firm voice, whether he had come unaccompanied. Hearing that Contade was alone, he took courage, and sent word to him to come in. Contade explained his errand, and M. du Maine at once sent out orders, warning the Swiss for duty. I fancy his uncertainty as to what was going to happen prevented him from sleeping very well afterwards: but I heard nothing more about him or Madame du Maine.

CHAPTER VIII

1718

The fateful day dawns—I warn the Count de Toulouse—I ask to see the deeds—The Council assembles—The Duke of Orleans explains the situation to the Count de Toulouse, who, with M. du Maine, leaves the Council Chamber—Explanation by the Regent to the Council—Their demeanour and amazement—The Regent calls on the Keeper of the Seals to make his statement—Speeches of the Council and their dismay—I depute La Vrillière to carry messages to the door—The Regent makes known his intentions regarding the bastards—I lay our petition on the table, thus outwitting Marshals de Villeroy and Villars—The Resolution is carried—The Regent announces the exemption of the Count de Toulouse—I thank the Regent on behalf of the peers—M. le Duc asks for the control of the King's education in place of M. du Maine—A stupefied silence follows his speech—We await the arrival of the Parliament—I request Tallard to reassure Marshal de Villeroy.

Friday, 26th of August.—About five in the morning the roll of drums was heard, and soldiers were seen marching through the streets. At six Desgranges went to deliver his *lettre-de-cachet* to the Parliament. "The gentlemen," to use their own language, had only just assembled; they sent for the First-President, who at once called the Chambers together; and after about half an hour the reply was given that they would obey. Then they discussed the question as to whether they should proceed to the Tuileries in carriages, or march through the streets in procession; it was decided in favour of the latter, partly because it was the more usual method, partly in hopes that they might arouse the people, and arrive at the Tuileries escorted by a howling mob.

I had had little sleep for the last week, and I slept still less on this night, the eve of such important events. Before six I was up, and shortly afterwards received my summons to the *lit-de-justice*; on the outside of it was a notice that it was unnecessary to wake me, a polite attention on the part of Desgranges; who, as he explained to me afterwards, was convinced that it contained nothing I did not know already.

The other summonses bore directions that the recipients were to be awakened; their surprise may be imagined. About seven one of the Regent's ushers arrived warning me to attend the Council of Regency at eight, wearing a mantle. I dressed in black; because I had only two suits which I could wear with a mantle, and the other was a very magnificent one, covered with gold lace; I would not wear that, lest people should accuse me, though very unjustly, of exulting over M. du Maine and the Parliament. While determined to play my part and make myself useful in any emergency, I resolved to avoid most carefully any airs of being behind the scenes, and to watch the proceedings attentively and modestly.

I started in my carriage, ordering it to stop at Valincourt's house, which was just opposite the Hôtel de Toulouse. He was a highly honourable and able man, who had been on the staff of the Count de Toulouse since his earliest youth, and was completely in his confidence. I wished to spare the Count de Toulouse all uneasiness, and to prevent him from being led astray by his brother; I therefore sent in a message to Valincourt, whom I knew well, asking him to come and speak to me. He came half-dressed, startled by the noise in the streets, and asked at once what it all meant. I took him by the hand, saying: "Listen to me, and do not lose a word of what I say. Go to the Count de Toulouse and tell him to be prudent; that things will happen to-day which may displease him on account of others, but he may rely on my word that not a hair of his head will be injured; I do not wish him to have a moment's uneasiness. Go to him now, without losing a moment." Valincourt embraced me as closely as he could, saying: "Ah! we have foreseen for some time that all this would end in a storm. There are people who richly deserve anything that may happen to them, but not the Count; and he ought to be eternally obliged to you." He went off at once to warn the Count de Toulouse; who found out afterwards that I had saved him from sharing his brother's downfall, and has never forgotten it.

Shortly before eight I arrived at the great courtyard of the Tuileries; the coaches of the Duke de Noailles and Marshals Villars and Huxelles were already there, with a few others. I went upstairs, stopping for a short time in the large antechamber where the King usually had his

meals, which had been prepared for the *lit-de-justice*, and congratulated Fontanieu on the completeness of his arrangements. He told me that he had only been admitted to the Tuileries at six that morning, with his workmen and materials, and everything had been put together with so little noise that no one was disturbed; the first person to perceive anything was the First Valet-de-Chambre, who, happening to leave the King's room at seven, was much astonished at the transformation of the antechamber, and went to inform Marshal de Villeroy.

After inspecting everything, I wished to pass on to the second antechamber, but was stopped by some pages, who informed me that no one was allowed to enter it. I asked where we were to assemble while waiting for the Council, and where the gentlemen were whose carriages I had seen in the courtyard. I was conducted up some steps to a door which was immediately opened to me; there I found the Keeper of the Seals and La Vrillière, and we were glad to have this opportunity for a talk before the business was begun. But that was not what I had intended; the carriages in the yard all belonged to suspicious persons, and I wanted to break in upon their conference as if by accident and find out something of their movements, if possible. However, as I got by mistake into the room of the Keeper of the Seals, I thought it would look odd if I asked to go elsewhere, and I abandoned my first design.

The Keeper of the Seals was standing, eating a crust of bread, as much at his ease as if the Council had been an ordinary one; and not in the least embarrassed at the prospect of having to speak in public on so many various topics, some of them so important and so thorny. He only seemed uneasy about the Regent's firmness, saying that it would never do for him to give way an inch. I reassured him on that point, saying indeed a good deal more than I felt sure of myself. I asked to see the deeds containing the declarations, especially that of the reduction of the bastards' rank. "Here," said the Keeper of the Seals, showing it to me, "this contains your business." I note this, because somebody was apparently listening at the keyhole; and this remark of his was quoted to me afterwards as a proof that I had been in the secret all along. He had with him two large velvet bags containing the documents necessary for every emergency, ready signed and sealed. He never let

these bags out of his sight ; and they were laid at his feet both at the Council and in the *lit-de-justice*, because they also contained the Seals themselves. No one knew this except the Regent, M. le Duc, La Vrillière, and myself. In an adjoining room was his apparatus for affixing the Seals, with hot water and fire ready lighted to heat the wax. While we were talking, a messenger came to say that the Duke of Orleans was arriving ; and the Keeper of the Seals put on his robes for the *lit-de-justice*, so as not to have to change after the Council ; while he did so I went downstairs alone, for I did not want people to know that I had been with him.

Since the great heat set in the meetings of the Council had been held in the room I had just left, because the King had been sleeping in the usual Council-chamber, his own room being very small. On this occasion, however, the King had been taken, as soon as he was out of bed, to dress in the little room ; and the Council met in his temporary bedroom, the table being placed at the foot of his bed. When I went in I found most of the members already assembled, looking grave and perplexed ; hardly any of them spoke to each other. A minute or two later the Duke of Orleans came in, looking easy and cheerful ; I went up to him and asked how he was. "Pretty well," he said, out loud ; then, putting his mouth nearer to my ear, he told me that, except that he had been frequently awakened for orders, he had slept well, and had come with his mind thoroughly made up to go through with the business. I was delighted to hear him say so, for his bearing looked as if he was in earnest ; and I whispered a few words of encouragement.

Then entered M. le Duc, who came up to me at once and asked whether I augured well of the Regent's firmness ; he looked in high spirits, rather too perceptibly so to those behind the scenes. The Prince of Conti, morose, and jealous of his brother-in-law, seemed plunged in thought ; though in reality thinking of nothing at all. The Duke de Noailles' eyes were sparkling with rage at having to play the part of an outsider on such a great occasion ; I had asked M. le Duc particularly that he should not be admitted to the secret, for I thought their intimacy much greater than it really was ; I found that he neither liked nor trusted him. M. du Maine entered by the King's private door, wearing a

mantle. He was always lavish of his bows ; but he never made so many, or such low ones, as on this occasion. He stood leaning on his stick by the side of the table, looking intently at everybody ; while he stood there I made him, with the keenest pleasure, the most smiling bow I ever made him in my life. He returned it graciously, and continued to watch the scene with an agitated countenance, muttering to himself almost continually.

A moment or two later the Duke of Orleans came up and spoke to me, evidently much put out at seeing M. du Maine's mantle, but not showing any sign of weakness. I reminded him that I had warned him to expect it ; adding that he had crossed the Rubicon, and that the least failure in resolution now would be his ruin. I said what I could to encourage him, but as briefly as possible, for I did not want people to notice our colloquy. M. le Duc came up immediately afterwards, asking uneasily in what mood I found the Regent ; I replied shortly that it was good, and I thought he had better go to him and help to keep up his spirits.

All these movements were beginning to arouse general attention, and I daresay they alarmed M. du Maine ; for no sooner had M. le Duc joined the Regent than he went over to where Marshal de Villeroy and d'Effiat were sitting, and had a rather long and apparently agitated conversation with them ; afterwards he came back and stood on the opposite side of the table to me ; his expression was wild, and I noticed that he talked to himself more than ever. In the meantime the Regent had been talking to M. le Duc and the Keeper of the Seals in another part of the room ; he had hardly left them when the Count de Toulouse entered, also wearing a mantle, and saluted the company in a grave, preoccupied manner, speaking to nobody. The Duke of Orleans looked at him and then at me, as if to show me how much troubled he was. I looked at him steadily, as much as to say : " Well, what then ? " The Duke of Orleans went up to the Count de Toulouse and told him, in the hearing of all who stood near, that he was surprised to see him in a mantle, for he had purposely omitted to notify him of the *lit-de-justice*, knowing that, since the late decision, he did not care to meet the Parliament. The Count said that was true, but when matters of importance to the State were concerned he put aside all other considerations. The Duke of Orleans made no reply, but came straight to me, saying :

"It cuts me to the heart to see that man; I should very much like to explain matters to him." I said that would be a delicate business, and he had better wait and see whether it could not be avoided.

In the meantime M. du Maine had returned to Marshal de Villeroy and d'Effiat, and a brief and apparently agitated consultation took place between them; M. du Maine then left them and made a sign to his brother, who went to where he was standing at the foot of Marshal de Villeroy's bed. M. du Maine said something in an agitated manner, apparently asking something to which the Count de Toulouse refused to assent. However, on the request, whatever it was, being repeated, the Count went across the room to where the Regent and M. le Duc were talking; and stood at a little distance as if waiting till the Regent was disengaged to speak to him. The Duke of Orleans perceiving this at once left M. le Duc, and they entered into conversation, turning their backs to the rest of the company. This went on for some time, during which M. du Maine remained where he was standing, looking like a man under sentence of death. At last the colloquy came to an end, and the Count de Toulouse returned to his brother, looking disturbed and angry; M. du Maine, on seeing him, turned as white as a sheet.

While I was watching them I heard the Duke of Orleans call me; I went to him and found him in great trouble. "I have just told him everything," he said at once; "I could not help it; he is a worthy, honourable man, and I could not bear my situation with him." "What do you mean, Sir?" I said. "How much have you told him?" "He came to me," he replied, "with a message from his brother to the effect that he was perplexed what to do; he saw that something had been arranged and knew he was not on good terms with me; and he wished me to tell him frankly whether I wished him to stay, or whether he would not do better to go away. I answered that, since he put the question to me, I thought he had better go. Thereupon the Count de Toulouse asked for some explanation; I told him that, so far as he personally was concerned, there was no reason why he should not remain, for none of the proceedings would affect himself; but possibly some of them might be unpleasant for M. du Maine, and therefore I thought he would do well to withdraw also. He said he could not see

how his position could be unaffected if M. du Maine's was attacked ; they were brothers, though there was no other bond of union between them, and bound to stand by each other. I replied that I was sorry to hear him say so ; but all I could do was to make a distinction in favour of merit and virtue ; adding some friendly words which he received rather coldly. He was gone to tell his brother what I said. Do you think I have done wrong ? " " No, Sir," I replied (for the thing was done, and I did not wish to embarrass a man whose courage I was most anxious to sustain), " I am glad you spoke so frankly ; it is the language of a man who has made up his mind what to do and fears nothing. But firmness will now be more necessary than ever." He seemed quite resolute, but at the same time very anxious that the bastards should withdraw ; indeed, I think that was his real motive in acting as he had done.

The Duke of Maine, who was deadly pale, seemed almost fainting ; it was with difficulty that he walked as far as the end of the table ; while he did so the Count de Toulouse came up to the Regent, made a brief remark, and walked away down the room. All this did not take a moment. The Regent, who was standing by the King's arm-chair, said in a loud voice : " Come, gentlemen, let us take our seats." Everybody drew up to the table ; as I was about to sit down I happened to look round and saw that the two brothers were close to the door. I almost bounded into the space between the King's vacant arm-chair and the Regent's seat, and said in a low voice, so as not to be overheard by the Prince of Conti : " Sir, they are going out ! " " I know they are," he replied quietly. " Yes, Sir, but do you know what they will do outside ? " " They will do nothing," he said. " The Count de Toulouse asked my permission to withdraw with his brother, and has promised me that they will behave discreetly." " But suppose they do not, or attempt to leave Paris, what then ? " " Then they will be arrested," he said ; " take my word for it, every precaution has been taken and proper orders given."

Thereupon I went to my seat, feeling easier in my mind ; but I had hardly reached it when he called me back, and said that, as they were not to be present, he should like to mention their affair in the Council. I replied that, since the only objection to doing so had disappeared, I thought it was only due to the Council to take it into his confidence.

He whispered to M. le Duc across the table, and called up the Keeper of the Seals, who both approved of his suggestion ; we then all sat down to the table.

All these movements had greatly augmented the general curiosity ; but, as nearly all eyes were turned towards the Regent, and consequently away from the door, the departure of the bastards passed unnoticed by the majority. I took the place usually occupied by the Count de Toulouse ; the Duke de Guiche, who sat next to me, left a place vacant between us, telling me that I had made a mistake. I took no notice at first, but at the second or third repetition of his warning I told him that, on the contrary, he ought to move up higher. " But the Count de Toulouse ? " he said, and stood petrified with astonishment, looking at the Duke of Maine's place on the other side of the table, which had been taken by the Keeper of the Seals. I gave his coat a pull, saying : " Come up higher, and sit down." He did so without understanding. " What is all this about ? " he said, " and where are these gentlemen ? " " I do not know," I replied impatiently, " but they are certainly not here." At the same time the Duke de Noailles, who sat on the other side of him, and who had apparently come to the conclusion that I was in the secret, leant over in front of the Duke de Guiche, saying to me : " For God's sake, Duke, do me the favour of telling me what all this means ! " As we have seen, I was on the worst of terms with him ; I merely looked at him coldly and disdainfully, and turned away without further reply.

After some delay all the members understood that they were to take their seats without regard to the bastards ; and the Council was opened. It will make my narrative more intelligible if I give a brief description of the arrangement of the table. The Regent never sat at the head of the table ; it was occupied only by the King's vacant arm-chair for he was always supposed to be present. The Regent occupied the highest seat on the right hand, but on this occasion he moved it round a little towards the arm-chair to enable him to see the members on both sides. M. le Duc, as the member of highest rank, sat opposite to him ; the others followed in order of rank, alternately on the right and left sides of the table. To the right of the Regent sat the Prince of Conti, then myself, then the Dukes de Guiche, de Noailles, and d'Antin ; Marshal d'Huxelles, the Bishop

of Troyes, La Vrillière, and d'Effiat, in the above order. On the opposite side of the table, to the left of M. le Duc, were the Keeper of the Seals, the Duke de la Force, Marshals de Villeroy, de Villars, de Tallard, d'Estrées, and Besons, M. le Pelletier-Sousi and Torcy. As the table was not quite long enough, d'Effiat and Torcy sat at the foot of it.

When all were seated, the Regent said he had called the Council together to confirm the resolutions passed at the last meeting; and, as he was convinced that the only way to secure their registration by the Parliament was to hold a *lit-de-justice*, he had ordered one to assemble. Owing to the excessive heat of the weather, he had thought it undesirable to endanger the King's health by exposing him to a crowded assembly at the Palace of Justice; he had therefore followed a precedent set by the late King, who summoned the Parliament on several occasions to meet him at the Tuileries. As the *lit-de-justice* was to be held, he thought it advisable to take advantage of it to obtain the registration of the letters-patent appointing the Keeper of the Seals; and this would be the first business of the meeting. He then ordered the Keeper of the Seals to read the letters.

The only importance of this business was that it compelled the Parliament to recognise the appointment of the Keeper of the Seals, which they detested; as they did himself personally. While the letters were being read I employed myself in scrutinising people's faces. The Duke of Orleans bore himself with an air of gravity and authority so new to me that I was quite struck with astonishment. M. le Duc looked cheerful and confident. The Prince of Conti seemed dazed, and appeared to take no interest in the proceedings. The Keeper of the Seals, grave and thoughtful, seemed rather oppressed; and it is true that he had a good many things to think about, especially as it was his first appearance in that capacity; nevertheless, as he rose and opened his bag he gave the impression of a clear-headed, resolute man. The Duke de la Force, with sidelong glances, was studying people's faces. Marshals de Villeroy and Villars occasionally whispered to each other; their eyes looked angry and their countenances dejected. No one had more command of himself than Marshal Tallard, but he could not altogether repress the emotions which agitated him; Marshal d'Estrées seemed stupefied, as if he did not

know where he was ; Marshal Besons, his face more hidden than usual under his great wig, watched the proceedings intently, with angry and lowering eyes. Pelletier looked on with the air of an indifferent yet inquisitive spectator ; Torcy, three times stiffer than he usually was, furtively kept his eyes open to everything ; d'Effiat, hot-tempered and angry, sat with knitted brows, ready to burst out, glancing with haggard eyes in all directions. Those on my side of the table I could not see so well ; I did occasionally lean forward and look down the rank, but these glances were very brief. I have already mentioned the inquisitive vexation of the Duke de Noailles. D'Antin, usually so free and careless in his manner, seemed stiff and ill at ease ; Marshal d'Huxelles tried to put a good face on the business, but could not altogether disguise the vexation which he really felt ; the old Bishop of Troyes, quite bewildered, showed nothing but surprise and perplexity.

Little attention was paid, I fancy, to the letters which the Keeper of the Seals was reading. As soon as the departure of the bastards was realised it had become clear that something affecting them was meditated ; and every one was in suspense to know what that " something " was. Then the sudden announcement of a *lit-de-justice*, for which everything was prepared beforehand, showed that some important decision had been arrived at about the Parliament—all this showed so much determination and forethought on the part of a Prince who had hitherto been looked upon as quite incapable of either that everybody was lost in amazement. Each member, according to the degree of his leaning towards the Parliament or the bastards, waited uneasily for what should come next. Several others seemed hurt at not being admitted to the secret, and alarmed lest the Regent should have escaped from their clutches. Never were there so many long faces, or such marked and general embarrassment.

When the Keeper of the Seals had finished, the Duke of Orleans said he thought it was hardly worth while to take the votes one by one ; he presumed that the Council was unanimously of opinion that the letters just read should be registered, and that this should be the first business taken at the *lit-de-justice*. After a short but marked pause, the Regent briefly recapitulated the reasons which had induced the Council to decide that the edicts of the Parliament should

Armand Gaston Cardinal de Rohan.

be annulled by another edict emanating from itself. He went on to say that to send this edict to the Parliament for registration would be merely exposing the King's authority to contempt, for that body would undoubtedly refuse to obey; he was therefore compelled to have recourse to a *lit-de-justice*, and, that being so, he had considered it advisable to keep his intentions secret so as not to give ill-disposed persons and cabals time to make preparations for further disobedience. Moreover, he was of opinion, in which the Keeper of the Seals concurred, that the number of remonstrances lately presented by the Parliament, and still more their tone, showed that it was high time to compel that body to restrict itself to its proper functions, of which it had lost sight for some time past; the Keeper of the Seals would therefore read to the Council a decree containing not only the rescission of the edicts, already decided upon, but a code of rules which the Parliament would be expected to observe for the future. Then, looking at the Keeper of the Seals, he said: "You will explain this matter to the Council better than I can; be good enough to do so before you read the decree."

The Keeper of the Seals then briefly described the origin of the custom of making remonstrances, its advantages and inconveniences, its proper limits, and the abuses which had grown up round it; the incompetence of the law-courts to meddle with the finances and affairs of State generally, and the necessity for a code of rules regarding the subject-matter and the form of its remonstrances, which the Parliament would henceforth have to obey. Having explained this clearly and forcibly, without prolixity, he proceeded to read the decree, which was afterwards published with very slight alterations.

The reading over, the Regent, contrary to his usual custom, showed his sentiments clearly by the approbation he expressed. Then, assuming an air and tone of authority which no one had ever noticed in him before, and which put the finishing touch to the astonishment of his hearers, he said: "On this occasion, gentlemen, I intend to depart from my usual method of taking the opinion of the Council, and I shall continue to do so for the remainder of the sitting." Casting his eyes round the table, amidst a silence so profound that the noise of an insect walking would have been audible, he turned to M. le Duc and asked his opinion,

M. le Duc gave it in favour of the decree, supporting it in a brief but forcible speech. The Prince of Conti did the same. I was the next, for the Keeper of the Seals had given his vote at the conclusion of his reading; I expressed my opinion as decidedly, but in more general terms; for I wished to avoid unnecessarily harsh terms in speaking of the Parliament, and it would have been unbecoming to assume the air of coming to the support of His Royal Highness which was quite proper in the Princes of the Blood.

All the members of the Council spoke; the Duke de la Force at some length, but most of them very briefly; some, such as Marshals de Villeroy, Villars, d'Estrées, and Besons, showed clearly that they consented only because they saw resistance was useless. They looked thoroughly dejected; it was evident that the humiliation of the Parliament was not at all to their liking, and that they had never thought such a thing possible. The Duke of Orleans gave his opinion last, with very unaccustomed force. After this another short pause ensued, during which he again cast his eyes round the Council.

At this moment Marshal de Villeroy, full of his own thoughts, muttered between his teeth: "But will they come?" This was overheard by the Duke of Orleans, who said in a tone of mild reproof that he had no doubt about it, in fact they had told Desgranges that they would do so. He added that it would be as well if we were informed as soon as the Parliament was on its way; to which the Keeper of the Seals replied that he had given orders to that effect. The Duke of Orleans said that, all the same, the attendants at the door ought to be warned; whereupon the Bishop of Troyes rose from his seat. I was so afraid that he would go and chatter at the door that I rose hastily and got there before him. As I was coming back d'Antin waylaid me and implored me to tell him what all this was about. I slipped away, telling him I knew nothing. "That is rather good!" he said; "tell that to somebody else!"

I had hardly regained my seat when the Duke of Orleans said something, I forget what, which caused the Bishop to start up again, and I went after him as before; but, as I passed La Vrillière, I begged him to carry all messages to the door, because I was afraid the Bishop of Troyes, or somebody else, might talk too much; and my seat was so remote from the door that my getting up every time would look odd.

La Vrillière understood, and performed that duty afterwards. D'Antin again caught hold of me as I was returning, imploring me with clasped hands, in God's name, to explain matters. I said: "You will see by and by," and passed on. The Duke de Guiche also attacked me, telling me that any one could see I was in the secret; but I turned a deaf ear.

When these little disturbances were over the Duke of Orleans, in a tone of authority even more marked than on the first occasion, informed the Council that he had another resolution to submit, of still greater importance. At this prelude renewed astonishment was depicted on the faces of his hearers, who sat in motionless expectation. After a moment's silence, he went on to say that, some time ago, he had given his decision in a dispute between the Princes of the Blood and the late King's legitimated sons (he carefully avoided throughout using the word "Princes"); that for reasons of his own he had at that time taken no notice of a petition presented to the King by the peers, praying for a restitution of their proper position with regard to these legitimated persons; but he thought he could no longer delay doing justice to this illustrious body, composed of all the greatest noblemen in France, most of whom had rendered distinguished services to the State. Though the persons concerned, he proceeded, were so nearly related to him, he had seen with displeasure their promotion to a position contrary to all justice and for which there was no precedent; for, although in recent times several of our Sovereigns had upset the proper order of the peerage on behalf of their favourites, their interference had been recognised only during their own life-time; thus the Dukes de Joyeuse and d'Epernon had been reduced to their proper rank among the peers immediately after the death of Henri III, and M.M. de Vendôme after that of Henri IV; while M. de Beaufort and M. de Verneuil had never been recognised by the late King as holding any precedence beyond that conveyed by the date of their peerages. He had communicated the peers' petition to the legitimated sons, and they had had plenty of time to reply to it; but they had not done so, having indeed nothing to say against claims so manifestly just in themselves and supported by all precedents. The time had arrived when, in the interests of the State, he could no longer defer giving his decision in a question so closely affecting the highest dignity in the

kingdom ; he had therefore instructed the Keeper of the Seals to embody it in a declaration, which he would now read, in order that it might be duly registered in the approaching *lit-de-justice.*

A profound silence followed this very unexpected announcement, which threw some light on the retreat of the bastards. There were a good many black faces among the auditors ; anger was depicted on those of d'Effiat and Marshals de Villars and Besons. Tallard looked stupefied, and Marshal de Villeroy as though he were about to lose his self-control altogether. To my great regret, I could not see the countenances of Marshal d'Huxelles or the Duke de Noailles. But I had enough to do to compose my own, for all eyes were turned on me ; I tried to assume a look of profound modesty and gravity ; I hardly moved my eyes, and never raised them above the level of the table. As soon as the Regent had begun his speech M. le Duc had cast a triumphant look on me, which almost disconcerted my gravity ; I took care not to meet his eyes a second time. Thus I sat motionless, in bodily constraint, attentive to watch the expression of my neighbours, my heart full of the keenest pleasure and at the same time of most delightful distress ; for, while I gave myself up to joy at an event for which I had longed so passionately, it was anguish to be forced to restrain my feelings ; and yet this anguish was itself bliss such as I have never felt before or since. How far inferior the pleasures of the senses are to those of the mind ! and how true it is that our rejoicing over deliverance from suffering is in proportion to the intensity of the sufferings themselves !

As soon as the Regent had finished speaking he told the Keeper of the Seals to read the declaration, which he did without any preliminary remarks. No music could be sweeter to my ears ; while it was in progress my attention was divided between listening to see whether the declaration was identical with that shown me by Millain, which it was ; and examining the impression made on the hearers. That was easy to discern from their faces ; and the reading had not proceeded far when the rage and despair depicted on the faces of Marshals de Villeroy and Villars warned me that it was high time to do something to prevent a dangerous explosion on their part. The remedy was in my pocket ; it was our petition praying the King to do us this justice

against the bastards ; I laid it on the table, opened at the last page, which contained all our signatures printed in capital letters. The two Marshals looked at the paper ; and it was evident that they recognised it, from the sulky expression which at once replaced the air of menace visible in their eyes, especially in those of Marshal de Villars. I hesitated before making this demonstration, because it showed too clearly that I was in the secret ; but I saw the two Marshals were on the point of raising an opposition which might have dangerous consequences. Nothing was so likely to restrain them as the production of their own signatures, but it would have been useless after they had spoken ; it would no doubt have put them to confusion, but it would not undo the mischief they had done. I took the safer course, therefore ; and I have reason to believe that I did good.

The reading was listened to amid profound silence and suppressed emotion. When it came to an end the Duke of Orleans said it was very unpleasant to make a proposal so deeply affecting his brothers-in-law, but he was bound to render the same justice to the peers as to the Princes of the Blood. Then, turning to the Keeper of the Seals, he requested him to give his vote ; which he did briefly, in well-chosen terms, but in a manner which put one in mind of a dog running over hot embers ; he wound up by supporting the resolution. M. le Duc also supported it forcibly, speaking very politely of the peers. The Prince of Conti followed in the same sense, but more briefly. Then the Duke of Orleans asked me to give my vote. Bowing low, without rising, I said that, as the senior peer present, I humbly thanked him on behalf of my colleagues for an act of justice of such importance to our dignity, and begged him to be assured of our gratitude and attachment to his person ; but I thought we ought not to go beyond this expression of thanks by giving a formal vote, for, as parties in the dispute, we could not act as judges in our own cause. I made another low bow, in which the Duke de la Force imitated me. I looked to see whom the Regent would call on next, intending to interrupt him if it was a peer ; but he had caught my meaning, and passed on to Marshal d'Estrées. He and the rest gave their votes, without speaking, in favour of the resolution, though most of them were not well pleased with it. I had endeavoured to modulate my voice so as

to render myself audible and no more, and to assume an air of modesty and simple gratitude. M. le Duc, however, smiled and maliciously made me a sign of approval; but I managed to preserve my gravity.

The resolution having been carried the Duke of Orleans said: "Gentlemen, justice having been done and the rights of the peers asserted, I have now to ask your assent to an act of grace; it concerns the Count de Toulouse only. Every one is aware that he has always disapproved of the exceptional rank conferred on his brother and himself; and, if he has not laid it aside since the Regency, it has only been out of respect for the wishes of the late King. Every one is also aware of his merit, his industry, and his disinterested character. I could not avoid including him in the declaration to which you have just assented; but, now that the rights of the peers have been placed beyond dispute, I think I may grant to his personal merit what I was bound to refuse to his birth, and make an exception which will confirm the general rule. I propose to restore him to the rank which he has hitherto enjoyed, but in such a way as to exclude any children he may have, and all other persons without exception. I am glad to say that I have the willing consent of the Princes of the Blood, and also of such peers as I have been able to consult. Considering the high esteem with which the Count de Toulouse is regarded in this Council, I do not doubt that this proposal will commend itself to you." Then, turning to the Keeper of the Seals, he added: "Will you be so kind, sir, as to read the declaration?"

While His Royal Highness was speaking I cast my eyes round the assembly; his proposal caused general astonishment, and those who disapproved of the previous resolution seemed plunged in consternation at a distinction so marked, and so humiliating for M. du Maine. Villeroy was stupefied; Villars furious; d'Effiat rolled his eyes; only Huxelles, by a great effort of self-control, remained impassible. When the Keeper of the Seals had finished reading the declaration the Regent took the votes; when he came to me I said I rejoiced to hear that he had been able at the same time to do justice to the peers and to confer a well-deserved favour on the Count de Toulouse; as this favour was purely personal and hedged about with safeguards, I thought the peers did themselves honour by assenting and contributing to it; I gave my vote gladly in favour of the resolution,

and, as the senior peer present, I did not hesitate to thank His Royal Highness on behalf of my colleagues. I could easily see that my applause was not well received, and my thanks still less so. The remainder gave their votes in silence, only a few muttered a few words between their teeth; but the confusion and marked disapproval of the cabal showed that it was high time the blow should be struck.

The resolution having been carried, M. le Duc, with a radiant glance at me, prepared to speak; the Keeper of the Seals, not perceiving this, also rose, whereupon the Regent told him that M. le Duc had something to say, and, drawing himself up with an air of dignity, added at once: "Gentlemen, M. le Duc has a proposal to make, which I consider just and reasonable; I do not doubt that you will think so too." Then, turning to M. le Duc, he said: "Will you kindly state what it is?" The agitation caused by these few words is indescribable; the members of the cabal looked like men hotly pursued, and staggered by the appearance of a new enemy when they thought their troubles were at an end.

"Sir," said M. le Duc, addressing the Regent as usual, "since you have done justice to the peers, I think I have a right to demand it for myself. The late King entrusted the care of His Majesty's education to M. du Maine. At that time I was a minor, and, according to the late King's ideas, M. du Maine was a Prince of the Blood, capable of succeeding to the throne. Now I am of age, and M. du Maine is not only no longer a Prince of the Blood, he is reduced to his rank among the peers. Marshal de Villeroy now takes precedence of him everywhere; he cannot continue to hold a position subordinate to him. I ask you to give me the office of superintendent of the King's education in place of M. du Maine; considering my age, my position, and my attachment to the State and to the King's person, I think you cannot refuse my request. I hope," he added, turning to his left, "to profit by the experience and advice of Marshal de Villeroy, and to carry out my duties in such a way as to gain his approval and friendship." Marshal de Villeroy had almost swooned when M. le Duc began about the education; he bowed his head till it rested on his stick, and remained in that position till M. le Duc had finished his speech, of which I believe he did not hear another word.

Casting his eyes round the assembly, the Regent said that M. le Duc's demand was just, and he felt sure it would be approved unanimously; he then proceeded to take the votes. When it came to my turn I looked at M. le Duc and said I supported his demand with all my heart. M. de la Force said a word or two, but all the others signified their assent by a bow, very slight in the case of the Marshals and d'Effiat; his eyes and those of Marshal Villars were blazing with wrath. When this was concluded the Regent, turning to M. le Duc, said: "I believe, sir, you wish to read to the Council the speech you intend to make to the King at the *lit-de-justice*?" and M. le Duc did so.

A few moments of stupefied and profound silence ensued, during which Marshal de Villeroy, pale and agitated, was muttering to himself. At last, as if summoning up his courage, he turned to the Regent, with downcast look and dying eyes; "All I can say is this," said he in a feeble voice: "all the late King's arrangements are now subverted; I cannot witness it without deep sorrow. M. du Maine is very unfortunate!" "Sir," said the Regent sharply in a loud tone, "M. du Maine is my brother-in-law, but I prefer an open to a concealed enemy!" At this startling declaration Marshal de Villeroy nearly fainted, and I could hear stifled sighs from various quarters; every one felt that the sword was drawn and the scabbard thrown away. To make a diversion, the Keeper of the Seals proposed that he should read the speech he had prepared for the opening of the *lit-de-justice*; as he was finishing it he was informed that some one wished to speak to him at the door.

He went out, and on his return drew the Duke of Orleans aside to a window, where they conversed for a few minutes; the rest of us sitting in silent expectation. Resuming his seat, the Regent said he was informed that, in spite of his promise to Desgranges, the First-President had moved a resolution in the assembled Chambers to the effect that the Parliament should decline to go to the Tuileries, assuring the King that it would listen to him whenever he should be pleased to meet it at the usual place, or signify his will by message; that this had caused a sensation, and the question was now being debated.

This news produced general consternation in the Council; but His Royal Highness, in a very calm tone, said he did not

believe the Parliament would refuse; nevertheless, he would ask the Keeper of the Seals what course he recommended in case the First-President's advice should be adopted. The Keeper of the Seals replied that he refused to believe that the Parliament would be guilty of an act of deliberate disobedience, contrary to all precedent; but, if it did commit such a folly, he was of opinion that it should be instantly suspended from all its functions, for nothing could be worse than that the King's authority should be openly set at defiance. The Duke of Orleans said that was undoubtedly the proper course, and proceeded to take the opinion of the Council. M. le Duc expressed himself strongly in favour of the suspension; so did the Prince of Conti, the Dukes de la Force and de Guiche, and myself.

Marshal de Villeroy, in a broken voice, deplored being driven to such extremities, and did all he could to avoid giving a positive opinion. Pressed by the Regent to do so, he dared not contradict him, but said he gave his vote with regret, and tried to dilate on the dangerous consequences which he foresaw. But the Regent interrupted him again, saying that he had made all his arrangements and was not in the least afraid of the consequences, for nothing could be worse than deliberate disobedience; he then passed on at once to the Duke de Noailles, who replied, in a tone of regret, that suspension would be a very unfortunate event, but that he gave his vote for it. Villars would have liked to display his eloquence; but he restrained himself, and merely said he hoped the Parliament would obey. The Regent pressed him for an answer, to which he replied that it would be better to postpone passing a resolution till we had more definite news. The Regent again called upon him to vote one way or the other; whereupon he testily gave his vote in favour of suspension, with a marked air of vexation. Nobody after that ventured any opposition, most of the Councillors merely bowing in sign of assent.

The Duke of Orleans then explained how he intended to enforce the suspension, and the steps he should take in various contingencies, which I have already explained; but he did not mention the preconcerted code of signals, nor did he allude to any arrests. Some discussion took place as to what should be done if the Parliament made a formal remonstrance; the Keeper of the Seals proposed that he should go to the King, and then announce that

His Majesty insisted on immediate obedience. This was approved of.

Shortly afterwards Desgranges came in, and informed the Regent that the Parliament was on its way to the Tuileries, and that the head of the procession had already left the Palace of Justice. This was pleasant news, especially for the Duke of Orleans.

The Regent then told the Presidents of Councils to bring up any business relating to their departments ; but none of them had any ready, having taken it for granted that the Council was called only for the purpose of annulling the Parliamentary edicts. The Council having thus come to an end for want of business, there was a general movement as if to break up as usual ; but the Duke of Orleans requested the members to remain in their places. La Vrillière went out, by his orders, to inquire for news ; but without result. It was now a little after ten o'clock ; and we sat there for quite half an hour, almost in silence. At last Desgranges announced that the First-President had already arrived in his carriage, and that the Parliament was not far behind him ; whereupon the impatience of members became uncontrollable, and many rosè and went to the windows. All the Duke of Orleans could do was to forbid any one to leave the room, on any pretence whatever ; an order which he was obliged to repeat two or three times afterwards.

M. le Duc came up to me at once, delighted that everything had gone off so well, and especially that the absence of the bastards had allowed their affair to be discussed in the Council. I told him the result of my observation of people's faces ; but briefly, for I did not wish to be noticed in conversation with him for long. Soon after I left him the Duke of Orleans came up, also in high spirits ; I spoke to him at greater length on the same subject, and drew his attention particularly to the displeasure shown by his friend d'Effiat. He did not seem surprised at this, but more so about Besons ; deploring his weakness in falling so completely under the influence of d'Effiat. I asked him if he was not afraid lest the bastards should even now be caballing with the Parliament, and make their appearance at the *lit-de-justice*; but, with his usual easy-going disposition, he seemed quite unconcerned. As a matter of fact, I felt no alarm myself, M. du Maine had appeared so terrified and his friends in the Council so thoroughly disconcerted ; but I

thought it as well to prepare the Regent for a possible surprise.

Seeing Marshals de Villeroy and Villars sitting with d'Effiat I left the Regent, in order to find out all that was going on, keeping my eye on the doors. Besons and others of their party joined the three, and a sort of desultory conversation went on between them ; in the meantime I walked up and down near them, occasionally speaking to one or the other ; at last I sat down by them. D'Effiat at once remarked to me that we had heard some strange resolutions; he did not know who had advised them, but he hoped to God that the Duke of Orleans might be the better for them. Marshal de Villeroy heaved deep sighs and uttered broken ejaculations, supporting them by shakes of his wig. Villars talked a little more ; he found fault angrily but briefly ; he did not conceal his displeasure about M. du Maine, but did not seem so much annoyed about the Parliament. I replied only by shrugs and gestures ; I did not argue with them, but I would not say anything either, for I had not put myself there to talk or persuade them, but to see and hear as much as I could. So far as I could make out from people so distracted, they represented a cabal unready for action and hopeless of any assistance from a Parliament as much taken by surprise as they were themselves. I soon left them quietly.

D'Antin had previously taken me aside and asked me whether I thought the Regent would, considering his relationship to the bastards, dispense with his attendance at the *lit-de-justice*. I said I thought so, whereupon he asked me to make the request on his behalf, and I now went up to the Duke of Orleans and did so. He said d'Antin had already spoken to him ; he approved of his delicacy, and had given him permission to stay away on condition that he told nobody and remained in the room where we now were till the *lit-de-justice* was over. In fact, Madame de Montespan's legitimate son, on intimate terms with her natural children as he was, could not decently take part in these proceedings.

I was uneasy in my mind about the sighs and muttered ejaculations of Marshal de Villeroy, especially about what he had said concerning M. du Maine's ill-fortune and the late King's testamentary arrangements being overthrown. This, combined with the fear which I knew he felt of being arrested,

made me uneasy lest his timidity and want of sense should lead him into making a pathetic speech in the *lit-de-justice*. Now a speech of that sort, delivered by a man in his position in the midst of an enraged Parliament, was a thing to be avoided if possible ; so I went up to his cousin Tallard and spoke to him about it. I said I should not have an opportunity of speaking to Marshal de Villeroy myself for some time, so I begged him to go and tell him from me that I could not help laughing at his uneasiness about being arrested, putting my message in such a way as to appeal to his vanity, but not sufficiently so as to inspire him with real courage. I added that the Regent had mentioned the subject to me, and spoken of him in such a way as ought to make him ashamed of his suspicions ; which I felt sure I could dissipate altogether when I had an opportunity of talking to him.

In fact, there would have been no sense in arresting him, not only because he was not worth the trouble, but because of the unfortunate effect it would have produced on the world if the two men to whom the dying King had entrusted his successor had both been removed at once. I thought it wise, if possible, to reassure this one, in order to remove any notion he might have taken into his head of making a scene in the *lit-de-justice*, and to make him feel that he had something to lose in the esteem of the Regent, and that such an act of folly would ruin him completely. Tallard did not deny his cousin's fears ; he spoke of them like a man of sense, without letting me see whether he thought them justified or not. Nevertheless, he thanked me warmly for my friendly attention, which he said would give great pleasure to Marshal de Villeroy. He lost no time in executing my commission ; next time I saw Marshal de Villeroy he said Tallard had spoken to him, and thanked me effusively ; but what he then told me is foreign to my present subject.

In the meantime the delay was becoming tiresome, and frequent messages were sent to inquire for news. Several members of the Council, anxious to get out and, perhaps, to talk, offered themselves as messengers ; but the Regent allowed nobody to leave the room except La Vrillière, and to make sure of it went and stood by the door himself. I had several short conversations with him ; in one of them I reminded him of the pain which our proceedings would

cause to the Duchess of Orleans, and suggested that he should write her an affectionate letter ; but he said he could not do it then, with so many people about. He seemed quite disposed to sympathise with her, but not much afflicted by the thought of her grief ; however, he promised me to write as soon as he had a moment's liberty. He chattered freely with everybody, just as if this had been an ordinary meeting ; and I must do him the justice to say that he was the only man present who remained perfectly calm, without the slightest affectation.

CHAPTER IX

1718

Arrival of the Parliament—The King proceeds to the Great Antechamber for the holding of the *lit-de-justice*—Significant glances in my direction warn me to be on my guard—Argenson faces the Parliament in his new capacity as Keeper of the Seals—The First-President speaks in much confusion—The King's answer falls like a thunderbolt on the Parliament—The downfall of M. du Maine announced—My emotions—I watch the audience—The Duke de Bourbon appointed to have charge of the King's education—The little King's indifference to the loss of M. du Maine—I pay out the First-President.

At last the Parliament arrived, and we all crowded to the windows like so many children. They crossed the great courtyard, marching two by two, wearing their scarlet robes, and were met in the Salle des Ambassadeurs by the First-President, who had already arrived in a carriage with President Haligre. While the two windows of our room were filled with spectators, I took care to keep my eye on what went on inside, for fear any one should go out. Whether from real necessity, or from a longing for forbidden fruit, several members of the Council did ask leave to go out for natural wants; and the Regent allowed it on condition that they spoke to no one and returned immediately. When Marshal Huxelles and some other suspicious members went out the Regent told La Vrillière that he had better take the same precaution; in reality, he meant him to keep them in sight. La Vrillière understood him and carried out his commission very well; I did the same for Marshals Villars and Tallard. This business of watching all that went on in a spacious room, remaining constantly on the alert to interrupt conferences without appearing to do so, was very tiring for body and mind; the Regent, M. le Duc, and La Vrillière took their share of the work, but that did not prevent my feeling extremely fatigued.

At last Desgranges came in, announcing that all was

ready ; the Regent sent him to remind the Parliament to have their deputation ready to receive the King at the appointed place, and then told us in a loud voice that it was time for him to go to the King. At these words I felt a thrill of joy when I thought of the great scene about to be enacted in my presence ; it warned me to keep a closer watch than ever over my personal demeanour ; and I endeavoured to assume a look of deep seriousness and modesty. Accompanied by Marshal Villars and other peers, I followed the Duke of Orleans into the King's room, where we found him dressed as usual, without mantle or bands. After a slight pause the Regent asked him if it was his pleasure to start ; and the few courtiers present immediately fell back. I made a sign to Marshal Villars, who advanced slowly towards the door, followed by the Duke de la Force, myself, the Prince of Conti, M. le Duc, and the Regent, in the order named. Behind us came the ushers of the King's Chamber, bearing their maces ; then the King, escorted by the four Captains of the Guard, the Duke d'Albret, Grand-Chamberlain, and the Marshal de Villeroy, his Governor. Marshal d'Estrées, Huxelles, Tallard, and Besons, who not being peers, could not precede His Majesty, brought up the rear with certain Knights of the Order and Governors of provinces who had been warned to form part of the King's escort.

We marched in this order to the Salle des Suisses, where the Parliamentary deputation, consisting of four *Présidents-à-mortier* and four counsellors, was waiting to receive His Majesty. As they approached the King I said to the Duke de la Force and Marshal Villars that it would save trouble if we went in and took our places at once ; they agreed, and we entered the hall in ceremony, marching in order of seniority. There were only us three, because d'Antin had stayed behind, the Duke de Guiche had resigned his peerage in favour of his son, Tallard was not a peer, and the four Captains of the Guard had to attend the King's person. Before going further, it may be as well to describe the arrangements of the hall for the *lit-de-justice*.

The Great Antechamber in which it was held was a spacious oblong. The throne, raised on steps, was at one corner ; the door by which the King entered was at the opposite corner, so that he crossed the whole length of the room diagonally. To the right and left of the throne, but

on a lower level, were three tiers of seats along the walls, the upper tier on the right being allotted to the Princes of the Blood and lay peers, that on the left to the two ecclesiastical peers, the Duke-Bishop of Laon and the Count-Bishop of Noyon, and those Marshals of France who were not peers. On the second tier to the King's left were the First-President Mesmes, and seven *Présidents-à-mortier* ; the third tier, and both the lower tiers on the right, were occupied by members of the Parliament according to their rank ; there were also rows of seats along the other two walls, occupied by the Parliament, and by spectators of distinction. On the steps leading up to the throne were the Keeper of the Seals, Marshal de Villeroy as the King's Governor, and other officials. The Regent sat at the King's right at the end of the upper tier of seats ; next him were M. le Duc and the Prince of Conti ; then the Duke de Sully as senior Duke, followed by myself, the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, and thirteen other peers.

When we entered the room, by the same door which the King was to use, the Parliament was already seated, and there was not much crowd about the entrance ; the officers of the Body-Guard cleared a passage for us. As I went in, I was so overcome with joy at the thought of the great scene which I was about to witness and the delightful moments so rapidly approaching, that I was forced to pause for an instant before I could see distinctly. I assumed an air of the deepest gravity and modesty. I knew that I should be closely scrutinised, not only by the Parliament, which had been sedulously encouraged to dislike me, but by all the spectators who were burning with curiosity to know what this assembly, so secretly prepared and so suddenly announced, was to bring forth ; for everybody was of course aware that I must know all about it, if only through the Council of Regency which I had just quitted. I was not mistaken ; directly I entered every eye was turned towards me. I advanced slowly, crossing the width of the room, receiving a smiling salute from the law-officers of the Crown as I did so, and ascended the three steps which led up to the high tier of seats. The peers were already in their places ; they rose as I entered, and I made them a respectful bow from the top of the third step. As I advanced slowly to my seat I passed in front of the Duke d'Aumont ; and at the thought of the interview which he had induced the

Regent to grant him for that afternoon, in order to effect a reconciliation between him and the Parliament and to put an end to all misunderstandings, I could not refrain from looking at him steadily, with a mocking smile.

At last I reached my place, between the Dukes de Sully and de la Rochefoucauld ; as we assumed our seats I told them, in a whisper, what was about to happen. Sully was delighted ; the other asked grumpily why the exception on behalf of the Count de Toulouse ? I had several reasons for being reserved with him ; for, although he had always treated me with perfect courtesy since the decision which gave me precedence over him, I knew he did not like it. I contented myself, therefore, with saying that I did not know the reason for the exception ; I tried, however, to obtain his approval. But if he owed me a grudge he had a still greater one against the Count de Toulouse, who had supplanted him in the office of Master of the Hounds ; I could get nothing out of him but dry and surly answers, so I left off talking to him.

In my lofty position, with nobody in front of me (for the duplicate bench in the upper tier which had been provided for peers unable to find room on ours did not extend as far as my seat), I was admirably placed for scrutinising the audience, and I made the most of my opportunities. Only one thing embarrassed me : I was afraid of showing my feelings too openly ; I felt that my glances were too significant ; in whatever direction I looked I met eyes fixed on me, and I determined to tire out their curiosity by severe self-restraint. I could not refrain, however, from darting a fiery glance at the First-President and his colleagues on the "grand bench," who were in full view from my seat. I cast my eyes over the ranks of the Parliament, and perceived a silent consternation among them which I had hardly expected ; it seemed of good augury. The First-President, evidently dejected, yet with an air of suppressed insolence, was an agreeable object to contemplate ; and so were the other Presidents, who sat bewildered, closely observing everything. The simple spectators, by which expression I mean all those who had no right to speak or vote, seemed equally astonished, but quite calm ; in short, there was a general air of keen curiosity, which everybody sought to gratify by a close observation of those who had just come from the meeting of the Council.

My inspection was cut short by the arrival of the King; the bustle which it produced did not cease till he and his attendants had all taken their places. All eyes were then fixed on the Regent, the Keeper of the Seals, and other personages of importance. The withdrawal of the bastards from the Council had caused some remark, but it was not generally known, and many among the assemblage now became aware of their absence for the first time. The consternation of the Marshals was clearly perceptible, especially that of Marshal de Villeroy in the conspicuous place which he occupied as the King's Governor; it increased the manifest vexation of the First-President, who, missing his master the Duke du Maine, glared horribly at the Duke de Sully and myself, seated in the places which the two brothers would have occupied. The attention of the whole assembly was at once directed to us; and every face showed redoubled expectation of some great event. The Regent bore himself with an air of dignity and quiet determination entirely new to him; his eyes were watchful, his manner grave but unembarrassed. M. le Duc was prudent and reserved, but there was something about him, I can hardly say what, which betrayed his high spirits; and one could see that he had some difficulty in restraining them. The Prince of Conti looked morose and thoughtful; perhaps his intellect was soaring in remote regions. I could not see these Princes after the business had begun, except when now and then I leant forward as if to look at the King. He was serious and majestic, and at the same time the prettiest little boy imaginable. He paid close attention to everything, and did not seem in the least bored; his bearing was one of becoming gravity; in short, he played his part very well indeed, without any shyness or embarrassment.

When all had resumed their seats, the Keeper of the Seals remained for a few moments silent and motionless, looking round the assembly; his eyes, blazing with intelligence, seemed to pierce every heart. The dead silence which prevailed testified to the eager attention, the curiosity, the fears and misgivings, of the audience. This Parliament, which, under the late King, had so often sent for d'Argenson and given him its orders as Lieutenant of Police, while he stood bareheaded at its bar; which, since the outset of the Regency, had lost no opportunity of showing its ill-will towards him: this haughty First-President, so proud of

his friendship with M. du Maine, so ambitious of the Seals; this Lamoignon, who had boasted that he would hang him in the Court of Justice which he dishonoured; they now beheld him as their master, vested in the insignia of the highest office of the law, and about, as his first function in that office, to make them return to the paths of duty and administer to them a public and stinging rebuke. I saw these conceited Presidents avert their eyes from the man whose presence wounded their vanity so cruelly, and whose piercing regard they were unable to sustain.

When the Keeper of the Seals had, after the manner of preachers, familiarised himself with the appearance of his august audience, he took off his hat, rose, and, kneeling on the step of the throne, received the King's commands; after which he returned to his chair, sat down again, and replaced his hat. I may say, once for all, that he went through the same ceremony at the beginning of each separate business, and also before and after he collected the votes; and each time he went to the King the Regent also drew near to hear what he had to say, and to suggest the King's reply. On returning to his place, after a moment's silence, he opened this important scene by a short speech, which I need not report, any more than those of the First-President and the law-officers of the Crown, because they have been printed in the report of the *lit-de-justice* drawn up by order of the Parliament. The first business, the reading and confirmation of Argenson's appointment as Keeper of the Seals, was merely preliminary, and served only to whet the curiosity of the audience.

The second act, dealing with the edicts and general conduct of the Parliament, was opened by another speech from the Keeper of the Seals. As he proceeded general consternation was visible in the ranks of the Parliament, and the face of the First-President darkened; the bitterest grief, vexation, and shame were vividly depicted on it. On what is called in the jargon of the Palace the "Grand Bench," to flatter the vanity of the Presidents who occupy it, every head was bowed simultaneously, as though at a given signal; and though the Keeper of the Seals modulated his voice so as to be only just audible, he managed it in such a way that not a syllable was lost, and every word told. It was far worse when the declaration was read; each paragraph was listened to with profound attention,

and renewed the anger of every official of the Parliament; these haughty magistrates, whose remonstrances, insolent as they were, had yet been too mild to satisfy their pride and ambition, were confounded by this sharp and public reprimand; they saw themselves brought back ignominiously to a sense of their proper position; and, except their little cabal, there was none to pity them. It is impossible to render in words all that was revealed by a single glance round this curious scene; I have the satisfaction of feeling that nothing escaped me, but to my great regret I am quite unable to describe all that I saw.

When the Keeper of the Seals had collected the votes and announced the result, I observed a commotion on the so-called "Grand Bench"; the First-President wished to speak, and he proceeded to deliver the remonstrance which has since been published, full of the most artful malice, shameless effrontery towards the Regent, and covert insolence towards the King himself. But the rascal trembled as he delivered it; his faltering voice, his downcast eyes, the trouble and confusion revealed in his whole demeanour, spoilt the effect of this last drop of venom which he could not refrain from pouring out as a libation to himself and his colleagues. It was then that I revelled, with inexpressible delight, in the spectacle of these insolent lawyers, who dare to refuse us the salute, kneeling humbly before the throne, rendering homage at the level of our feet, while we, with our hats on, occupied seats flanking the same throne on either side; this strongly marked distinction of position and attitude showed so unmistakably the disproportion between those who are, literally, *laterales regis*, and this *vas electum* of the Third Estate. I could not take my eyes off these haughty burgesses; I watched the "Grand Bench," and the undulations of the fur-trimmed robes as its occupants sank into long and repeated genuflexions, which only came to an end by express permission of the King, conveyed through the Keeper of the Seals—robes trimmed with wretched minever trying to look like the ermine represented in pictures; I gazed with delight on these bare heads, bent humbly to the level of our feet.

As soon as the First-President had finished his remonstrance the Keeper of the Seals rose and went to the King; returning to his place, he cast his eyes on the First-President and said: "The King insists on being obeyed, and that

instantly." This emphatic utterance fell like a thunderbolt on the Presidents and Counsellors ; their heads sank on their breasts, and it was some time before they raised them again. With the exception of the Marshals of France, few of the spectators seemed inclined to sympathise with them in their trouble and humiliation.

But this triumph was nothing to that which was to follow immediately in the third act of the piece. After his announcement of the King's will regarding the Parliament the Keeper of the Seals allowed a brief interval to elapse ; then he rose and went to the King, and, returning to his place, sat for a few moments in silence ; it was clear that something more was coming, and every one was racking his brains to guess what it was. It came out afterwards that the Parliament expected a decision of the affair of the cap in our favour ; I will explain later on why that affair was not mentioned. Others, who had noticed the absence of the bastards, guessed more correctly that it was something affecting them ; but none hit upon the real explanation, certainly nobody suspected its full importance.

At last the silence was broken by the Keeper of the Seals, and in his very first sentences he announced the downfall of one brother and the restoration of the other. The effect of this announcement on the audience is indescribable. Though fully occupied in keeping my own countenance under restraint, I scanned closely the expression of the faces around me. The prevailing sentiment depicted in them was astonishment ; many seemed to be glad, either from hatred of M. du Maine or good-will towards the Count de Toulouse ; some were horror-struck. The First-President lost all self-control ; his face, usually so bold and conceited, was convulsed with a nervous twitch ; only the excess of his rage kept him from fainting. It was worse still while the declaration was being read, for it was a legislative act, and every paragraph announced a fresh step in the downfall of M. du Maine. It was listened to with breathless attention, and every eye was fixed on the registrar who read it. Before he had got half-way through, the First-President, grinding the few teeth left to him, let his forehead sink on to his stick, which he held with both hands ; and in this singular posture he listened to the remainder of this document, so crushing for him, so reviving for us.

As for myself, I was nearly dying of joy. I feared I should

faint ; my heart, dilated by my emotions, could hardly find room to beat. I was determined to lose nothing of what was going on, but it was only by a violent effort that I could force myself to attend ; it was torture to me, and yet this torture was delicious. I counted the years of our degradation ; the wretched occasions when, dragged to a meeting of the Parliament like a victim to the sacrifice, I had been forced to swell the triumph of the bastards ; I reckoned up the successive steps by which they had climbed over our heads ; I contrasted these things with this day of justice and order ; with the terrible downfall now announced, which restored us to our proper position. I thought with the keenest pleasure of the language in which I had dared to address the Duke of Maine, even under the despotism of his father, on the day of the scandalous climax of the affair of the cap. My eyes now beheld the fulfilment of the threats I had uttered ; and it was with deep thankfulness that I reflected that I had myself brought it about. How glorious was this fulfilment in the presence of the King and so august an assembly ! I triumphed, I was avenged, I revelled in my vengeance ; I rejoiced in the full gratification of the most constant and fervent wish of my whole life. I felt as though I should care for nothing after this. Nevertheless, I listened unwearied to this delightful reading, every word of which caused my heart to vibrate as the strings of a violin vibrate under the bow ; and, as I listened, I watched the impression made on the audience.

As the Keeper of the Seals uttered his opening sentences on this affair, the eyes of the two Peer-Bishops had encountered mine, and I never saw such astonishment and delight as they revealed. Owing to the separation of our seats, I had been unable to tell them anything beforehand ; and the announcement came upon them as such a startling surprise that they could not help showing their emotion. I drank a fresh draught of joy as I looked at them ; then I averted my eyes lest my feelings should be too much for me.

When the registrar had finished the first declaration he began at once to read that in favour of the Count de Toulouse, in accordance with the instructions he had received from the Keeper of the Seals. This declaration, making such a marked distinction between the two brothers, put the finishing touch to the confusion of the First-President and other friends of M. du Maine. It caused general sur-

prise, for to those not behind the scenes it was unintelligible ; the friends of the Count de Toulouse were delighted ; others were pleased at the exception in his favour, though they could see no particular reason for it. Though the reading of this document was listened to with attention, I noticed more whispering and movement than before ; but the important clauses stating that this favour was shown to the Count de Toulouse with the consent of the Princes of the Blood and at the request of the Peers of France rekindled the interest of the audience, and caused the First-President to raise his nose from his stick. Some of the peers even, stirred up by the Bishop of Metz, grumbled between their teeth ; angry, as they explained to their neighbours, that they should be committed to such a statement without having been previously consulted in a general assembly of the peers. But how was it possible to confide such a secret to an assembly comprising peers of all ages, not to speak of other objections ? The very few who were annoyed complained that the peers belonging to the Council of Regency had taken upon themselves to answer for their colleagues without authority ; and they were, perhaps, more influenced by this petty jealousy than by dislike of what was done for the Count de Toulouse. The ill-feeling was appeased almost immediately ; but nothing in this world goes quite smoothly.

I had taken an opportunity of warning the Keeper of the Seals not to ask the peers for their votes on this question ; nevertheless, after taking those of M. le Duc and the Prince of Conti, he came straight to the Duke de Sully and myself. Fortunately I had a better memory than he had, or chose to show ; besides, this was my affair ; so I thrust my plumed hat in front of the Duke de Sully, in a very marked manner ; saying to the Keeper of the Seals : "No, sir ; we are interested parties, and cannot be judges in this business ; all we have to do is to thank the King for the justice he has been graciously pleased to grant us." He smiled, and begged pardon. I had purposely repulsed him before the Duke de Sully had time to speak ; and I was glad to see that this refusal to vote was noticed by everybody. The Keeper of the Seals immediately turned back, and, without going to any more peers, took the votes of the Marshals, and then went along the benches of the Parliament. After going to the King he resumed his seat, and then ordered the

declarations to be registered, thus putting the finishing touch to my rejoicing.

M. le Duc then rose, and, after bowing to the King, forgot to sit down and put on his hat, according to the immemorial right of a Peer of France ; consequently none of us rose. He then proceeded, standing and bareheaded, to read his request for the charge of the King's education ; and, as he had a poor voice, he read it very unintelligibly. When he sat down the Duke of Orleans rose, and made the same mistake. Standing and bareheaded, he said that M. le Duc's request appeared just ; adding, after some complimentary expressions, that the Duke du Maine, having been reduced to his proper rank among the peers, Marshal de Villeroy could not be expected to serve under him ; and this alone, he said, was a strong argument in favour of M. le Duc's demand, besides those which he had himself alleged.

The demand caused great astonishment in the assembly, and intensified the despair of the First-President and of those few who, to judge by their dejected looks, seemed to sympathise with M. du Maine. Marshal de Villeroy, though he said nothing, looked much displeased ; the eyes of the First Equerry filled with tears ; I could not well discern the countenance of his cousin, Marshal d'Huxelles, who sat motionless, with the brim of his immense hat pulled well down over his face. The First-President sat as if thunderstruck : his face fell every moment perceptibly lower, till at last I really thought his chin would drop on to his knees.

In the meantime the Keeper of the Seals called on the law-officers of the Crown to speak ; they replied that they had been unable to hear what M. le Duc's demand was ; whereupon his paper was handed down to them. Blancmesnil cast his eyes over it, and spoke ; after which the Keeper of the Seals proceeded to take the votes. I gave mine in a rather loud voice, saying : "This time, sir, I vote with all my heart for entrusting the King's education to M. le Duc." The result having been announced, the Keeper of the Seals ordered the Chief Registrar to come to his side with his little writing-table, in order to register and sign the decrees which had been approved of in the King's presence. No opposition was raised ; and the registration was carried out in the most formal manner, under the eyes of the Keeper of the Seals, who watched the proceedings

most attentively; but, as there were five or six documents to be copied and recorded, it took a long time.

I looked intently at the King when the question of his education was mentioned, and could not perceive the slightest change in his face, nor any sign of reluctance. That had been the last act in the drama, and was freshly impressed on his mind when the business of registration began; yet, having no more speeches to listen to, he began at once to laugh and talk with those about him. Although the Duke de Louvigny sat at some distance from him he noticed that he wore a velvet coat, and remarked, laughing, how hot he must be; and all this very prettily. Every one was struck by the indifference he showed about M. du Maine, which gave the lie to the assertions afterwards made that his eyes had filled with tears, though he had not dared to offer any opposition. Now the fact is that his eyes remained perfectly dry and cheerful, and that he never mentioned M. du Maine's name afterwards, except once when, on the same afternoon, he asked him carelessly where he meant to go; nor did he say a word about his children. It is true that these children would hardly give themselves the trouble of going to see him; and, when they did go, they kept up a sort of little separate Court even in his presence, and played among themselves. Nor had he seen much more of M. du Maine himself, who, either from motives of policy, or because he thought the King was not old enough, used to spend a short time by his bedside in the morning, and never went near him for the rest of the day.

While the registration was going on, I cast my eyes quietly round the assembly; as a rule, I kept my countenance under control, but I could not resist the temptation of paying out the First-President, and I treated him to numerous and prolonged stares. I darted looks of insult and contempt upon him which must have pierced him to the very marrow; usually he dropped his eyes when they encountered mine, but once or twice he met them with a steady gaze; then it was my delight to insult him by furtive, but meaning, smiles which put the finishing touch to his exasperation. I revelled in his impotent fury, and rejoiced to make him feel that I did so. Sometimes, when I saw that he was looking, I amused myself by calling the attention of my two neighbours to him; in short, I did everything I could think of to annoy him.

As soon as the business of registration was over the King descended from the throne, crossed the floor escorted by the Regent, the two Princes of the Blood, and the noblemen of his suite, and left the hall through the same door by which he had entered. At the same time the two Peer-Bishops left their seats, and came to place themselves at our head ; as they passed me they squeezed my hand in congratulation. We followed them out of the room, marching two by two, in order of seniority : after which the Parliament also marched out. The way was cleared for us as far as the steps leading to the courtyard ; but the crowd and the wonderful scene prevented us from talking much and exchanging congratulations. My feelings were almost too much for me ; fortunately my carriage was close at hand, and I got away so quickly that within a quarter of an hour after the close of the assembly I found myself at home.

CHAPTER X

1718

I receive an unpleasant commission and start on it reluctantly—Reception of my news by the Duchess of Orleans—I return to Paris—Behaviour of the Duchess of Orleans—The Count de Toulouse—His Equerry's plain speaking—He attends the Council of Regency—My congratulations—Arrest of three members of Parliament—Parliament's ineffectual protest thereat—Effect of the Regent's action on Foreign Powers, and on France itself—The affair of the cap.

I HAD agreed to meet the Duke of Orleans, M. le Duc, and the Keeper of the Seals at the Palais-Royal directly the *lit-de-justice* was over, to talk over what had happened ; but, as everything had passed off so quietly, I conceived that I was at liberty to break this engagement ; and I was not sorry to avoid giving an additional proof that I had been in the secret, for a good deal of jealousy had been aroused. On arriving at my house I found the Duke d'Humières, Louville, and my whole family awaiting me on the doorstep, including even my mother, whom curiosity had induced to leave her room for the first time since the beginning of the previous winter.

I was answering their eager inquiries, while changing my coat and shirt, when I was informed that M. de Biron insisted on seeing me, although I had given orders that no visitors were to be admitted. He told me that the Duke of Orleans had been expecting me at the Palais-Royal in accordance with my promise, and had sent him to tell me that I was to go there immediately, as he wanted me to do something for him. I asked Biron if he knew what it was ; he said it was to go to St. Cloud and inform the Duchess of Orleans of the events of the morning. This was a thunderbolt for me ; I remonstrated with Biron, who agreed that it was a most unpleasant commission, but added that the Duke of Orleans had said there was no other person he could ask to perform it ; and from his manner he was sure

I should not induce him to change his mind, so I had better go to the Palais-Royal at once with a good grace. When I returned to the other room the expression of my face had altered so completely that Madame de Saint-Simon cried out, thinking I had heard some shocking news. I explained what was the matter; Biron stayed for a few minutes, again urging me to obey without delay, and then went off to his dinner. Our own was served; but I thought it would be unwise to put the Duke of Orleans in a bad temper by keeping him waiting, so I hastily swallowed some soup and an egg, and went off to the Palais-Royal. I was determined, however, if possible, to get out of being the bearer of such a very unpleasant message.

I found the Duke of Orleans walking up and down his room impatiently; he asked me whether Biron had told me what he wanted me to do. I said he had, and, to show my willingness to obey, I had come with six horses to my carriage, ready to start for St. Cloud; but I thought he had not given the matter sufficient consideration. Just then the Abbé Dubois came in, to congratulate him on the successful issue of the morning's proceedings; he took the opportunity to exhort the Regent to continued firmness and to show that he meant to be master. I joined in this advice; and congratulated the Duke of Orleans, as I could do with perfect sincerity, on his easy yet dignified bearing at the *lit-de-justice*, and the ability and clearness of his speeches in the Council. I wanted to give him courage for the future, and also to put him into a good humour so that he might let me off my hateful errand. The Abbé Dubois dilated on the terror shown by the Parliament, and the little satisfaction its members had got out of the people in the streets, where, he said, not a soul had followed them; and the comments they heard from the shops had been very different from what they had expected. That was a fact; and the members were so much alarmed that several of them dared not go as far as the Tuileries; that notorious sedition-monger Blamont, *Président-aux-enquêtes*, deserted on the very steps of the Tuileries, and took refuge in the chapel, where he was so faint and ill that he had to be revived with the wine kept in the vestry for the celebration of Mass.

After a time Dubois took his leave, and we resumed the conversation which he had interrupted. The Duke of Orleans said he could quite understand that it was dis-

agreeable to me to announce to the Duchess a piece of news which, with her peculiar ideas, would give her so much pain, but he really could not bring himself to write to her; they were not on very affectionate terms, and his letter would probably be preserved and shown to other people, which was not desirable; I had always been the peacemaker between them, and had been taken into the confidence of both; for that reason he had decided to ask me to undertake this commission, for the sake of the attachment which he knew I felt for both of them. I replied, with the utmost respect, that I was the very last man in the world whom he ought to pick out as the bearer of such a message. I was extremely sensitive about the rights of my dignity; the precedence given to the bastards had always been intolerable to me, and its abolition, which had been effected that morning, was the one thing above all which I had most ardently longed for. I had said so plainly a hundred times to the Duchess of Orleans herself, as well as to her brothers: she must therefore know that this was one of the happiest days of my life; and I felt that it would be not only unbecoming and disrespectful on my part, but almost insulting, to enter her presence with tidings which would cause her such bitter grief.

"You are quite mistaken," said the Duke of Orleans; "it is precisely because you have always been perfectly candid on this point, and spoken so freely to the Duchess about it, that you are the proper person to make the announcement. She has never taken offence at what you said; on the contrary, though sorry that you should have such opinions, she has liked you all the better for expressing them so freely. She has a very friendly feeling towards you; she knows your anxiety to promote peace and a good understanding between us; there is no one from whom she will receive this announcement better than from you. We look upon you as one of the family; we have both spoken to you freely concerning our relations with each other; I beg you not to deny me this token of friendship. I know how unpleasant it is to be the bearer of such a message; but it is a service of importance, and you must not refuse it to a friend."

I protested with all my might; I told him that the result would be a quarrel between the Duchess and myself; that the world would think me extraordinarily wanting in good

feeling if I undertook such an embassy. It was all useless; he would not listen to anything I had to say, and in the end I was obliged to give way. I then asked for his orders; they were simply to announce what had occurred, and to tell the Duchess expressly that he would not have gone to such extremities without the clearest proofs against her brother. I suggested that possibly she had heard the news already, and, knowing what my errand was, might refuse to see me; if so, I said, I hoped he would not take it amiss. He said, in that case I need not insist on being admitted, and promised not to be angry with her. Having obtained this concession, which I intended to turn to good account, I reminded him that Madame was at St. Cloud, and asked whether he wished me to see her or not. He thanked me for thinking of this, and told me to give her a full account of the proceedings, from him. He wound up by requesting me to come back as soon as possible, and report the result of my mission to him; and with a final protest I left him.

As I went out I saw one of the Duchess of Orleans' pages, who had just arrived on horseback from St. Cloud. I asked him to go back as fast as his horse could gallop, and tell the Duchess Sforza that I was on my way with a message from the Duke of Orleans and wished particularly to see her in private before I went in to the Duchess. My intention was to see nobody but her, and to make her the bearer of my message, on the pretext of showing more respect to the Duchess of Orleans; since I had previously ascertained that her husband would not be angry with her if she refused to admit me. But all my poor precautions were brought to naught by the prudence of the page; not caring to be the bearer of such news as he had learnt at the Palais-Royal, he contented himself with announcing my impending arrival, said not a word to the Duchess Sforza, and disappeared.

I ordered my coachman to drive slowly, to give plenty of time for the page to arrive before me, so that the Duchess Sforza might be ready to receive me. On the way I congratulated myself on having devised this scheme; but still I could not help fearing lest I might have to see the Duchess of Orleans after all. I pictured to myself the despair of a Princess who, without loving her brothers, especially the Duke of Maine, was madly devoted to their interests; who looked upon her own marriage as one between equals, to say the least of it; who thought it a matter of course that her

brothers should enjoy the position and all the privileges of Royalty, and regarded any one who ventured to think differently on that subject with supreme contempt, tempered, in my case only, with compassion ; who was now to hear that her brother, that monstrous colossus, had been hurled from his pedestal by her husband ; and to hear it from me ! from me, whom she knew to be overjoyed at the very thing which would cause her such bitter grief ! It is painful to be the bearer of evil tidings to any one ; how much more to a person for whom one feels real esteem and friendship, combined with the respect due to exalted rank ! and how much more in such peculiar circumstances !

While I was indulging in these unpleasant reflections my coach arrived in the great courtyard of St. Cloud, and everybody rushed to the windows. On alighting, I asked for Madame Sforza ; I was told that she was attending service in the chapel with the Duchess of Orleans. I then went to the rooms of the Maréchale de Rochefort, and sent to the Duchess Sforza begging her to come at once ; the messenger returned saying that she was not to be found, and that the Duchess of Orleans, hearing of my arrival, had returned to her own rooms. I was determined not to stir till I saw Madame Sforza ; but hardly a minute had elapsed before the Maréchale de Rochefort hobbled in on her crutch, sent by the Duchess of Orleans to bring me to her. She took me by the arm, and led me off in spite of my remonstrances, asking me as we went what news I brought. " Why, the news that you must have heard already," I said. " What do you mean ? " she replied. " We have heard nothing at all, except that there has been a *lit-de-justice* ; and we are on thorns to know what it was about." I told her, and she almost fell down with surprise. I tried again to back out of going to the Duchess of Orleans, but repeated messages came from her, and the Maréchale, though shocked and distressed at the thoughts of the scene I was about to go through, held me tight by the wrist. She ushered me into the antechamber, where the Duchess of Orleans' attendants were terrified when they saw the alarm depicted on my own face. They informed me that she was in the adjoining room, and I went in.

As soon as I saw her, I bowed ; but not at all in my usual manner. She did not notice this at first, but called to me, in her ordinary cheerful way, to come in. Seeing that I

remained standing at the foot of the three steps which led down into the room: "Good God, sir," she exclaimed, "how strange you look! What news are you bringing me?" I took a few steps towards her, saying: "Madame, have you heard nothing?" "Nothing," she replied, "except that a *lit-de-justice* has been held; nothing of what passed there." "Ah!" I said, "then I am more unfortunate than I supposed." "What is it?" she exclaimed, "tell me quick!" And, sitting up on the sofa on which she was lying, "Do come nearer," she added, "and sit down!" I repeated that I was in despair; more and more agitated, she said: "But do speak; if you bring me bad news it is pleasanter to hear it from a friend than from any one else." This cut me to the heart, and made me forget everything except the pain I was about to give her. I drew nearer, and told her that the Duke of Orleans had reduced her brothers to their proper rank among the peers, according to seniority, but had restored to the Count de Toulouse for his life the honours which he now enjoyed. After a pause I added that M. le Duc had been entrusted with the superintendence of the King's education in place of M. du Maine.

Her tears began to flow in abundance; she made no reply, no exclamations, but wept bitterly. She pointed to a chair, and I sat down, with my eyes fixed on the ground. I told her that the Duke of Orleans had forced this unpleasant commission on me, and he had expressly charged me to inform her that he had the strongest proofs against M. du Maine; and, though he had hitherto spared him out of consideration for her, he could do so no longer. She replied gently that her brother was very unfortunate; and after a pause inquired whether I knew what crime he was accused of. I said the Duke of Orleans had told me nothing except what I had already repeated, and I had not ventured to question him upon a subject of that kind. I added that the Duke of Orleans wished me particularly to tell her how sorry he was to give her so much pain; and I explained my own reluctance to be the bearer of such a message, and how strongly I had remonstrated against it; to all of which she replied only by gestures, and a few kind words broken by sobs.

I also told her, having obtained the Duke of Orleans' express permission to do so, that I had done my best to dissuade him from taking action against her brothers; upon

which she said that, for the present perhaps I would dispense with any professions of gratitude on her part. I replied that I quite understood that for the present she could think of nothing but her grief; and I was to tell her that the Duke of Orleans wished her to consult her own feelings entirely in her movements. Thereupon she asked whether I knew his wishes on the subject of her seeing her brothers. I replied that, as he had said nothing about it I presumed he had no objection to her doing so; certainly there was no reason why she should not see the Count de Toulouse, and I thought I could take upon myself to say that it would be the same with regard to M. du Maine. She began talking again about him, and said, with a fresh outburst of tears, that he must have meditated some great crime, and really she was reduced to hope that it might be so. I remained seated, with my eyes fixed on the ground, in painful uncertainty as to whether I had better retire or not. At last I told her that, from motives of respect, I did not like to leave her, but I thought she would probably wish to be alone. After a pause she said she wished for the attendance of her women. I rose, saying that I would send them in, and if Her Royal Highness wished to see me again I should be found in Madame's rooms; or, if not, with the Duchess Sforza or the Maréchale de Rochefort.

Neither of these ladies was at home, so I went up to see Madame, who, I found, had been expecting me impatiently. She was writing, as usual, when I went in; but rose at once, exclaiming: "Well, sir, here is great news!" I apologised for not having gone to her first, as was her due; explaining that the Duke of Orleans had assured me that she would not mind my first visit being paid to the Duchess. She said it was only right that it should be so, and then asked for news with great eagerness. To my surprise I found that she knew nothing, except that there had been a *lit-de-justice*. I told her what had been decided at it: at which she seemed overjoyed. "At last! at last!" she exclaimed; adding that her son ought to have done as much long ago, but he was too kind-hearted. Then she asked me to relate the events of the morning from beginning to end; which took me nearly an hour, for she had many questions to ask; she was delighted to hear of the humiliation of the Parliament and bastards, but above all that her son should at last have shown some firmness and decision.

We were interrupted by the Maréchale de Rochefort, who asked permission to take me to the Duchess of Orleans, to which Madame at once consented. I found Her Royal Highness engaged in writing to her husband; she read me what she had already written, six or seven lines; then, turning to me with a gentle, friendly air: "I have asked you to come back to do me a service," she said. "My tears are too much for me; I cannot write; will you kindly finish my letter for me?" and, handing me the pen, she dictated the remainder. I was astonished beyond measure at her letter; I have always regretted that I did not take a copy of it. Nothing could be worthier or more dignified than the sentiments she expressed; and her choice of language was equally remarkable; her letter could not have been surpassed for eloquence, clearness, and elegance of style by one of our best writers, amid the most tranquil surroundings; and yet it was dictated without a single correction at a time when she was distracted by the most violent emotion, and interrupted by sobs and floods of tears. What a pity that a mind adorned by so much ability, sense, and sound judgement should have been marred by the perverse pride of bastardy which rendered them all useless, not to say pernicious, in public affairs!

The purport of the letter was to inform her husband that she intended to retire for a short time to Montmartre, there to deplore the misfortunes of her brothers and to pray for his own prosperity. But while I was paying a second visit to Madame she changed her mind, and said she would return to Paris immediately; so I sent her back the letter, which she had entrusted to me. I had a long interview with the Duchess Sforza, and begged her to plead my cause with the Duchess of Orleans; especially to lay stress on the manner in which I had endeavoured to save M. du Maine; which she promised readily to do, for she was a great friend of mine. I then returned to Paris, and went straight to the Palais-Royal, where I made my report to the Duke of Orleans.

He was delighted to hear that Madame approved of what had been done with regard to M. du Maine; and said his sister the Duchess of Lorraine would be glad too, for he had just received a letter from her urging him to act without delay. But he was by no means pleased to hear of the approaching arrival of the Duchess of Orleans; indeed, the

announcement seemed to upset him altogether. He asked my advice as to whether he should see her on her arrival. I said I thought he had better send a message by the Madame Sforza, saying that he would see her or not, as she preferred, for he wished to consult her own wishes in every way. If he saw her, I said, he must treat her affectionately; he must expect coldness, perhaps reproaches; certainly tears and sobs; but under the circumstances he must, as a gentleman, bear them with patience, and not lose his temper, whatever she said or did. I repeated this several times, so that he might get it well into his head; and I did not fail to reproach him for abusing our friendship as he had done in sending me on such an errand. Then I left him to await her arrival, and went home. It was nearly dark when I reached my house; and I was thoroughly worn out with the fatigue, mental and bodily, which I had gone through during the last week; and especially on the eventful day then drawing to a close.

I heard afterwards that when the Duchess of Orleans arrived her two brothers were waiting for her in her rooms; she asked at once whether they had permission to see her, for she would not meet them without her husband's approval. The interview between them lasted over an hour; as soon as the bastards left, the Duke of Orleans went down to her rooms, accompanied by the Duchess of Berry. The Duchess of Orleans behaved with singular moderation and self-control; she even went so far as to tell her husband that she was so conscious of the honour he had done her in marrying her that all other feelings must give way to that. It was the first time she had expressed such a sentiment in all their married life of nearly thirty years. Then she gave way to her grief, asking her husband to excuse her if she wept over her brother's misfortune, though she was compelled to believe him guilty; whereupon they all three, wife, daughter, and husband, broke out into sobs and tears. This afflicting scene lasted nearly an hour: after which the Duchess went to bed, to the great relief of her husband and the Duchess of Berry.

She maintained this gentle behaviour for two or three days, trying to bring about an interview between her husband and M. du Maine, from which she hoped great results. Finding, however, that she had no chance of success, she became angry, shut herself up in a dark room,

and gave vent to most violent outbursts of fury. She well knew the man she had to deal with. Any one but the Duke of Orleans, seeing that kindness was of no avail, would have told her straight out that she must choose between himself and her brother; if she preferred him, she ought to look upon his interests as her own, and not disturb the harmony of their union by harping on her brother's affairs; if, on the other hand, she sided with this brother, she was at liberty to retire to any place she might choose, and live as she pleased, but without ever seeing himself or her children again. If the Duke of Orleans had taken this line he would have been spared many painful scenes, and the Duchess herself would have been happier; but it was not for me to give such salutary advice, and I carefully refrained from the slightest hint on the subject. I was the more careful not to talk to him about the Duchess, and to change the conversation when he mentioned her, because I had told Madame Sforza that I thought it more respectful to Her Royal Highness not to intrude upon her for a little time, but wait till she expressed a wish to see me. I went to the Palais-Royal to inquire after her health, but without going in; and she sent Madame Sforza to say that she hoped I would not be offended, but for a few days it would be painful to her to see me. I quite understood her feelings, for she could not doubt that I was delighted at the event which caused her so much grief. But these "few days" never came to an end, and from that time forth I was never again on friendly terms with her.

I thought it right to take the earliest opportunity of paying my respects at the Hôtel de Condé, whither everybody was rushing to offer congratulations. My reception reminded me of my experiences at St. Cloud on the day when the engagement of the Duchess of Berry was announced, such are the vicissitudes of this world! M. le Duc drew me aside to talk to me; and all the usual frequenters of the house, though I had very little acquaintance with them, vied with each other in making themselves agreeable. I really hardly knew where I was! I had a long conversation with d'Antin; and another with Torcy, whom I urged to see his friend Valincourt and do his best to prevent the Count de Toulouse from retiring into private life. As I was taking leave Madame de l'Aigle pressed me to make friends with Madame la Duchess; but I replied plainly that I had always been on the most friendly terms with the Duchess of

Orleans, and the sisters were on too bad terms with each other for me to think of such a thing. Although Madame la Duchesse had known nothing about the *lit-de-justice* beforehand, and would have been better pleased if her elder brother had been left in the enjoyment of his superior rank, the Duchess of Orleans' hatred for her and her family became more bitter than ever; and she expressed it publicly, in a very unbecoming way.

For a short time after the *lit-de-justice* the Count de Toulouse hesitated whether to accept the restoration of his rank as Prince of the Blood, or to throw in his lot with his brother. It became known afterwards that it was the blunt plain-speaking of his equerry the Chevalier d'Hautefort which finally decided him. Hautefort was a naval Lieutenant-General, who had been pushed on the service by the influence of the Count de Toulouse; though neither a man of virtue nor a philosopher, he affected to be both, in order to gain the admiration of fools. He told his master plainly that he was being duped by his brother and his sister-in-law, who had not the slightest affection for him, and who had only their own silly schemes to blame for what had now befallen them. No doubt his brother's fall was painful to him, but it had been the means of procuring for himself an unprecedented and most flattering distinction; it was for him to say whether he would spurn it and give up all his public employments to follow a madwoman and her husband, who would only laugh at him for his pains. He was still under forty; if he went and buried himself alive at Rambouillet at that age, he might for a few days receive the plaudits of fools; but, after that, he would find himself deserted by everybody, and would have plenty of time for boredom and repentance. Hautefort wound up by saying that, for his own part, when he joined his staff he had believed himself to be entering the service of a Prince of the Blood, real or factitious, and not that of a private gentleman; and on that footing he would willingly remain with him for the rest of his life; but, as for burying himself alive at Rambouillet, such a thing was quite out of the question. All the best members of the Count's household, added Hautefort, agreed with him, and would follow his example one by one; as for himself, he had thought it best to make his intentions perfectly clear from the beginning.

This prompt declaration made a great impression on the

Count de Toulouse. He did not at all like the prospect of a solitary life at Rambouillet ; and saw no reason why he should refuse a favour freely offered to him for the sake of the crazy Duchess of Maine, whom he abhorred, and of a brother whom he neither loved nor respected. He determined therefore to retain his rank and former position.

While this question was still undecided, on the day following the *lit-de-justice* I sent for Valincourt and spoke to him about it. I told him the part I had taken throughout, and that the declaration in favour of the Count de Toulouse had been issued at my suggestion. I begged him to use all his influence with his master to prevent him from ruining himself for the sake of his brother ; he agreed to do so, and asked to be allowed to mention the obligation the Count was under with regard to me. That was what I wanted him to do ; but I also asked him to induce his master, if possible, to attend the meeting of the Council of Regency next day, and, further, to get rid of his guests as soon as possible ; for M. and Madame du Maine, with their children, were then staying with him at the Hôtel de Toulouse. Valincourt soon returned, bringing a message of thanks from the Count, and also an assurance that he would attend the Council, which I was very glad to hear. I asked Valincourt to find out whether his master would like to receive congratulations from M. le Duc, or whether he would prefer us to say nothing ; for M. le Duc, who was very anxious to show him some mark of his personal esteem, had consulted me on the subject. Valincourt said he thought it would be better to say nothing, but he would put the question straight out. In the evening he wrote to say that the Count de Toulouse felt his brother's degradation more keenly than his own distinction, and would prefer not to be congratulated. That same evening he went to see the Regent, who told me afterwards that his visit had been brief but satisfactory.

Next day he came to the Council, where certain of the members were surprised, and not very well pleased, to see him. As soon as we had taken our seats I whispered to him that, in accordance with his wishes, I had refrained from congratulations ; but I could not help saying one thing, that this was the first occasion on which I took my seat below him with pleasure. His answer was such as might be expected from a man of his nature : it was cold and dry ; and

I spoke to him no more during the sitting. This coldness on his part lasted for some time ; I fancy he thought propriety required it, and I took no pains to thaw him ; but by degrees we resumed our friendly intercourse. I heard indeed from Madame Sforza that he scolded the Duchess of Orleans so roughly for not seeing me that she was reduced to tears. But she was very angry with him for not sharing the fortunes of his brother.

Early in the morning of the 29th of August Blamont, *Président-aux-enquêtes*, and two other members of the Parliament were arrested in their beds ; they were in a mortal fright, and made no resistance. Blamont was taken straight to the islands off Hyères ; the others to Bellisle and the island of Oléron respectively ; they were not allowed to speak to any one, and were dreadfully alarmed lest their ultimate destination should be the Mississippi. No papers of importance were found in the houses of the two counsellors, but a great many of a most compromising description in Blamont's ; it seems extraordinary that a man who appeared to go out of his way to court arrest should not have taken the trouble to put his papers in a safe place.

No sooner were these arrests known at the Palais de Justice than the Chambers assembled, and resolved to send messages of sympathy to the wives of the exiled members ; a numerous deputation was also sent to the King and Regent to remonstrate. It was received at the Palais-Royal in the morning, and subsequently at the Tuileries. The First-President, on behalf of the Parliament, delivered very urgent speeches, couched, however, in extremely guarded and respectful terms. The replies were grave and vague. The Parliament then resolved to suspend its functions ; for the next two days the law-courts were closed, and an advocate who ventured to plead before the *cour-des-aides* was threatened with dismissal. But this resolution, which would have put an end to the administration of justice, and was only adopted in the hope of exciting a tumult, after the fashion of the famous Broussel, could not be sustained. The Parliament then resolved not to separate for the usual September vacation ; but, when it came to the point, this resolution was also abandoned ; all the Parliament did was to instruct the president of the vacation-court to see the Regent frequently and demand the release of its members. But when the remote destination of the prisoners became known

this president realised that there was no intention of letting them go in a hurry ; and, after calling on the Regent two or three times, he spared him any further importunity.

Thus ended the very important affair of the *lit-de-justice*, which assured the repose of the country by confirming the King's authority in the hands of the Regent. If his attempt to assert himself had been unsuccessful he would have been left with a mere shadow of power, and serious troubles must have followed. It was an experiment full of risk, but it succeeded ; partly, through the rapidity and profound secrecy with which it was carried out ; partly, because the growing cabal was as yet unprepared, and its leaders were weak and irresolute. It is astonishing what an effect was produced abroad by this vigorous action on the part of the Regent. Foreign Powers were beginning to fear that it was useless to enter into engagements with a Prince who, as the King of Sicily said in so many words, allowed himself to be stripped of his authority by a pack of lawyers. The *lit-de-justice* reassured them, and enhanced his credit enormously.

The discomfiture of the Parliament had an equally striking effect within the kingdom. All the other Parliaments had been tampered with, though some had not responded to the overtures of the Parliament of Paris ; now they all decided to keep quiet, and disaffection in the provinces no longer dared to raise its head. Even Brittany, where seditious speeches had been made openly in the assembled Estates and in the Parliament, gradually returned to its obedience ; and though a few private individuals, led astray by crazy ambition, did afterwards break out in rebellion, their numbers and influence were so insignificant that they were easily dealt with in the ordinary course of justice.

Before leaving this interesting episode in the history of the Regency I may as well explain why I did not take this opportunity to settle the affair of the cap. I reflected that our main object was the reduction of the bastards to their proper rank, and that if we did not obtain it on this occasion we might almost abandon hope for the future. The Regent was naturally weak, and it was not advisable to make too many demands upon him at once ; the affair of the cap was a mere trifle compared with the other matters ; moreover, we had already carried our protests so far that it seemed impossible that justice should not be done us sooner or later. I thought it probable that the Parliament, in its rage at the

public snub administered to it, and making common cause with M. du Maine, would proceed to violent extremities, for which we should be blamed if we made too much of our private grievances against that body. These and other considerations led me to the conclusion that the occasion was not suitable for raising the question of the cap, and that there are times when one must suffer patiently and in silence. Moreover, though I did not attach too much importance to the notion, I confess it did occur to me that our moderation on this occasion might soften the animosity of the Parliament, and lead it to reflect candidly on the manifest injustice of the aggressions made on our rights by its successive Presidents ; perhaps it might even decide the question in our favour itself, and so heal the breach between the peers and the Parliament.

CHAPTER XI

1718

Madame d'Alègre's warnings—I procure two favours—The Chevalier de Rancé—I prevail on the Regent not to accept the Duke de Mortemart's resignation and secure the reversion of his office to his son—The Duke de Bourbon entertains the Duchess of Berry at Chantilly—The Chevalier de St. George—Godet, Archbishop of Rouen, and his parish priests—I counsel delay and inquiry at the Council—Salt-smugglers—Strained relations with Spain—The Duke of Berwick and Hasfeld—Cellamare's plot—An important despatch and its bearers—Their arrest at Poitiers—Cellamare's papers examined by the Abbé Dubois and Le blanc—His arrest—Complicity of M. and Madame du Maine—Their arrest decided upon—St. Aignan and his wife—Their escape from Spain—A successful ruse.

Not long after the *lit-de-justice* Madame d'Alègre came to see me, and in her usual disjointed, enigmatic fashion explained that the mysterious hints she had formerly given me had been intended to warn the Regent against the dangerous cabal which had just been struck down—not a moment too soon, she said. She begged me to tell him not to let himself be lulled into security ; she knew the people he had to deal with ; they were stunned for the moment by a blow which they had not expected from a man of his habits and disposition, but it would only have the effect of making them adopt more energetic methods. They had by no means abandoned their designs ; they relied on assistance from the Spanish Government, which was furious at the treaty lately concluded between France and the Emperor and the Maritime Powers ; they would also avail themselves of the displeasure with which the same treaty had been received throughout France.

I did not fail to report this conversation to the Duke of Orleans ; but I found him completely satisfied with having got so successfully over the great crisis which had forced such unusual exertions upon him : he was just like a man who has thrown himself on his bed after a toilsome journey,

and will listen to nothing till he is rested. He told me to give his warmest thanks to Madame d'Alègre ; but said he thought for the present he had nothing to fear from anybody ; and for the time being it was impossible to convince him of the fallacy of this dangerous conviction. When I saw Madame d'Alègre I thought there was no harm in going a little beyond the letter of my commission ; I told her that the Regent was extremely obliged to her, and begged her to keep her eyes open and report to me if she noticed anything suspicious ; adding plenty of flattery and compliments. She continued to see me from time to time, with as much secrecy as ever.

About this time I procured two favours, which gave me more pleasure than any I ever received for myself. As we have seen in the early part of these Memoirs, the saintly and celebrated Abbot of la Trappe was the man for whom I had the most profound veneration, and the warmest affection, which he reciprocated. He had left a surviving brother, whom I had never known ; he was called the Chevalier de Rancé ; he had long been commandant of the port of Marseilles, and was the senior officer of the galleys. He was now at least eighty-four years of age, but quite vigorous in body and mind. I was informed by his cousin, the Bishop of Troyes, that he had arrived in Paris ; which, so far as I know, he had never visited before. I hastened to call upon him and ask him to dinner. He was so extraordinarily like M. de la Trappe that I could not take my eyes off him. All of a sudden I took it into my head to do something for him. There had never been more than one Lieutenant-General of the galleys ; the office is purchaseable, and was held at this time by the Marquis de Roye. Without taking any one into my confidence, except the Bishop of Troyes, I went to the Duke of Orleans and induced him, after some trouble, to appoint a second Lieutenant-General in the person of the Chevalier de Rancé, with additional pay amounting to 10,000 livres, the only stipulation being that after his death the appointment should lapse. I was delighted at my success, and my pleasure was increased by that of the Chevalier de Rancé, who was completely taken by surprise. He spent two months in Paris—not so long as I could have wished ; and lived for some years to enjoy his new position.

I will now explain the other favour which I alluded to. We have seen that for various reasons I was not on speaking

terms with the Duke de Mortemart, although an intimate friend of the family, including his mother. He was First Gentleman of the Chamber, and a dispute had already arisen between him and Marshal de Villeroy about the duties of their respective functions, which the Regent had decided in favour of the Marshal; whereupon the Duke de Mortemart had talked of resigning his office. About this time they had another squabble of the same sort, in which Marshal de Villeroy kept his temper admirably, knowing that he was in the right. The affair was reported to the Regent, who gave Mortemart a sharp reprimand; whereupon he went home and sent in a written resignation of his office. It happened to be one of the days on which I worked with the Duke of Orleans, and when I went in he had just read the letter. He was furious; he said he was tired of the Duke de Mortemart's impertinence, and this time he should be taken at his word; and, looking hard at me, gave me to understand that I should be appointed to the vacancy. The thought of appropriating an appointment which had formerly been held by M. de Beauvilliers, at the expense of his grandsons, filled me with horror, and I pleaded earnestly with the Regent. I told him it was not M. de Mortemart that he must think of, but the memory of M. de Beauvilliers, and his great obligations to him when his influence with the Duke of Burgundy was all-powerful; to say nothing of the assistance he had previously received from him at the time of the Duchess of Berry's marriage. I wound up by telling him that, Regent as he was, he was bound to submit patiently to a good deal of impertinent folly on the part of the son-in-law of M. de Beauvilliers. After a good deal of trouble I prevailed, and the resignation was torn up.

I went at once to the Duchess de Mortemart and told her of her son's act of folly, and how I had saved him, warning her that it would be useless for me to interfere if he repeated it. Mortemart himself, when he came to his senses, was alarmed at the danger he had incurred. A day or two afterwards I was surprised to see him enter my room and express his warmest thanks. I replied curtly that he owed me none, for I had not thought of him at all; what I had done was owing to my tender and grateful recollection of M. de Beauvilliers, and my anxiety to preserve the appointment for his grandson; adding, drily, that he had better

not try the Duke of Orleans' patience so far another time. As may be supposed, his visit did not last very long after this ; we parted civilly, but coldly ; and that was the last I saw of him. His wife, whose piety and virtue deserved a better husband, came next day to thank me ; but I told her I was amply paid in advance for any service I had rendered her by the many kindnesses I had received from her father ; and I was glad to have had this opportunity of showing my attachment to his memory. We embraced tenderly when she left me ; I never saw her again, for she died soon afterwards ; and her husband never realised how much he had lost.

I was still uneasy about his appointment, for he was sure to get into fresh quarrels and probably repeat his resignation ; so I determined to ask the Duke of Orleans to grant the reversion of his office to his son, who was only six years old. In this way there would be nothing to fear from Mortemart's folly ; he would be unable to sell his office, and if he chose to resign it he would be taken at his word, and his son would become the titular holder of it. To my great joy, I succeeded ; and went at once to announce the news to the Duchesses de Mortemart, Beauvilliers, and Chevreuse, who were extremely surprised and grateful. I told the first two that they had better clinch the business by thanking the Duke of Orleans formally ; which they did next day. He received them very graciously, and the reversion was immediately secured in proper form. I never did anything which gave me more pleasure ; and the family have never forgotten this service.

In order to please the Duke of Orleans, towards whom he felt very friendly since the *lit-de-justice*, M. le Duc asked the Duchess of Berry to Chantilly for a succession of magnificent entertainments. Her visit lasted ten days, and each day there was something different ; nothing was spared which profuse expenditure, combined with admirable taste, could provide. The Duchess of Berry was accompanied by her whole Court ; and, though she did not abate one inch of her grandeur, she had every reason to be satisfied with the honours accorded to her. She behaved very politely to M. le Duc, and to Madame la Duchesse, his mother ; but she treated his wife with haughty disdain, and said not a single word to her the whole time she was at Chantilly ; she had never forgiven her for having been the means of preventing

a marriage between her sister and the Prince of Conti, as I related in its proper place. An adventure occurred in the midst of the festivities which might have ended in a tragedy. M. le Duc had, on the side of the lake opposite to the house, a menagerie well stocked with rare birds and beasts. A very large, handsome tiger escaped, to the great alarm of the actors and actresses and musicians who were walking about that side of the gardens. Fortunately, its keeper managed very cleverly to coax it back into its cage before it had done any harm.

The Chevalier de St. George, prevented by his unfortunate position from finding a bride of suitable rank, entered into a matrimonial engagement with the daughter of Prince James Sobieski, who gave her a dowry of 600,000 livres ; to which the Pope added 900,000, with a pension of 40,000. The marriage took place by proxy, and the bride, accompanied by her mother, started from Olaw in Silesia on the 12th of September to join her husband at Rome. But when they arrived at Innspruck they were arrested by order of the Emperor, who, at the same time, in his base complaisance to King George I, deprived the Prince of the pension he had hitherto given him, ordered him to quit his territories, and forbade the Duke of Modena to proceed with the marriage arranged between his son and another of Prince James Sobieski's daughters. This was carrying persecution rather far, and there were few people even in England who did not consider the Emperor's conduct disgraceful. The Pope was very indignant.

I should not record the trifling story which follows, if it were not an illustration of the tyrannical and underhand methods employed by the leaders of the party of the Constitution. I have already mentioned d'Aubigny, that factitious cousin of Madame de Maintenon's, who was unearthed from his obscurity by Godet, Bishop of Chartres, and promoted to the Archbishopric of Rouen. He was a really pious and honourable man, but grossly ignorant and obstinate, a fanatical supporter of the Constitution, and the tormentor of his diocese ; where, relying on the support of Madame de Maintenon, he had recourse to all sorts of high-handed proceedings. The King's death and the consequent retirement of his protectress had not rendered him more reasonable. About this time he quarrelled with some highly respected parish priests, whom he prosecuted in his

own diocesan court, and suspended from their functions. They appealed to the Parliament of Rouen, which reversed the decision of the diocesan court, took off the interdiction, and restored them to their parishes. The Archbishop was furious, and rushed off to Paris to obtain a reversal of the decree of the Parliament of Rouen. The Keeper of the Seals, faithful to his ancient prejudices, and as ardent a supporter of the Constitution as the Archbishop himself (though, being a man of sense, he did not go to such extremes), promised him entire satisfaction, and made no doubt of carrying the matter through with a rush.

I had heard nothing about the affair, when, on the 23rd of October, on arriving at the Palais-Royal, I saw the Archbishop waiting for his carriage. He was very red in the face and evidently in a violent state of agitation; so much so, that he did not recognise me, though I knew him very well and had been on friendly terms with him when he was my Bishop, at Noyon. I made him a bow, which in his distracted state he did not return, and passed on. All this made me suspect that he had been having a discussion with the Regent, and consequently that some fresh outrage was meditated in support of the Constitution.

When I was admitted I mentioned to the Duke of Orleans that I had seen the Archbishop of Rouen, and asked if he knew what had disturbed him so. He replied that the prelate was very angry with the Parliament of Rouen, and then told me all about the affair, which, he said, would come before the Council of Regency that afternoon. Though he did not say much I could see that he was prejudiced in favour of the Archbishop; I suspected that the Keeper of the Seals had been talking to him; and I was afraid a resolution reversing the judgement of the Parliament of Rouen, and censuring the court responsible for it, would be carried in the Council without due consideration. I said not a word, but got through my business with the Regent as quickly as possible; I then went straight to M. le Duc, and told him what I had discovered; adding, that I thought the business ought not to go through the Council without some inquiry. He fully agreed with me, and said he would speak to some of the members before the sitting began. I also spoke to the Count de Toulouse, and to several other members, who were all of my opinion. The Duke de la Force, a rabid Constitutionist, demurred at first; but I

told him firmly that I had no wish to commit the Council to either side ; all I wanted was to have some light thrown on the subject in dispute before we gave a decision one way or the other, and therefore in reason and common justice he was bound to support me. He was rather afraid of me, and promised his support.

When the Council was assembled the Duke of Orleans said that, before we began the regular business, the Keeper of the Seals would lay before us a case in which the Archbishop of Rouen was interested ; and, turning to him, he made a sign to him to speak. Argenson explained the case for the Archbishop with admirable skill and lucidity, but said not a word about the arguments on the other side ; he wound up, as I had foreseen, by moving that the judgement of the Parliament of Rouen should be reversed, and the court responsible for it reprimanded. Directly he sat down the Duke of Orleans called on M. de Canillac, as the junior member, to give his opinion ; but before he could do so I intervened. Addressing the Regent, I said that, although the Keeper of the Seals had explained the case for the Archbishop, we knew nothing about that on behalf of the parish priests, nor consequently about the arguments which had led the vacation-court of the Parliament of Rouen to reverse the decision of the diocesan court. The vacation-court must have had some reasons, good or bad, for the judgement it had delivered ; and, till we knew what they were, we were not in a position to decide whether that judgement should be upset or not. Subject to His Royal Highness's approval, I thought the motion before the Council should be, that the Parliament of Rouen be requested to furnish its reasons for the judgement delivered in the vacation-court.

All the members of the Council pricked up their ears at this, and the Keeper of the Seals fidgeted about as if he did not like it at all. The Duke of Orleans said at once that I was right, and proceeded to put the motion in the form I had suggested. All voted for it, even d'Effiat and the Bishop of Troyes, who saw that it would be carried without them and thought it better not to show their partiality too openly. Even the Keeper of the Seals signified his assent by a nod. The Regent announced that the motion was carried unanimously ; then turning to the Keeper of the Seals he said : "You will be good enough to write to the Parliament of Rouen ask-

ing the reasons for their decision." Argenson made no reply, but whispered to the Duke de la Force, who repeated it to me afterwards: "It is impossible to carry anything in this Council which touches on the Constitution; and it is the last time I shall ever attempt it!" He kept his word; and even this affair was never brought before us again. But, some time afterwards, Pontcarré, First-President of the Parliament of Rouen, told me, to my great surprise, that they knew they were indebted to me for preventing the reversal of their judgement; it had been allowed to stand; and he had ordered my action in the Council of Regency to be recorded in their registers.

The Regent granted their liberty to the two counsellors of the Parliament of Paris who had been imprisoned; but not to the President Blamont, whose seditious conduct had been notorious. Sedition was still rife throughout the kingdom, kept alive chiefly by means of salt-smugglers. These people had become very numerous, and had long been encouraged by those interested in fomenting trouble. They marched about in strong bands, well armed and disciplined, successfully resisting all attempts to disperse them; and, as they never robbed anybody, they had the good-will of the rural population, who were thus enabled to procure cheap salt; for the salt-tax, combined with other taxes, was a constant source of irritation. These salt-smugglers, under recognised chiefs whose movements were directed by unknown persons in higher position, had become dangerous; they were a focus of agitation, and the people looked upon them as their champions. The Regent, who had hitherto treated them with contempt, became alarmed when rather too late, and was compelled to take strong measures. There were more than five thousand of them in Champagne and Picardy; General Mezières, Governor of Amiens, was sent with troops to disperse them.

Everything betokened an approaching rupture with Spain; our Ambassador there, the Duke de St. Aignan, had become odious to Cardinal Alberoni, and found himself in a very unpleasant position. He received orders to return; and, as the quarrel between the two countries was no fault of his, I got the Duke of Orleans to give him a place in the Council of Regency. The Duke of Berwick, when leaving for Guyenne, of which he was Governor, acceded to the Regent's request that he would take command of the army

destined for active service in case of war. He was a Grandee of Spain, and had the Golden Fleece; his eldest son, who lived in Spain, had married a wealthy Spanish heiress, and held the Duchies of Liria and Quiriça, granted to his father as a reward for his victory over the English and Imperialists at Almanza. Having received such favours from the King of Spain his acceptance of the command aroused much unfavourable comment, and the King and Queen of Spain never forgave him. The Duke of Orleans, on his part, never forgot this service on the part of the Duke of Berwick.

Hasfeld behaved with greater delicacy. The Regent had a very high opinion of him, and the Duke of Berwick was anxious to have him with his army. His reply to the Regent was as follows. "Your Royal Highness," he said, "I am a Frenchman; I am under great obligations to you, and all my hopes of advancement depend on your good-will. But," he added, taking his jewel of the Golden Fleece in his hand, "what am I to do with this, which I received from the King of Spain with the permission of my own Sovereign, if I serve against him?" He explained his scruples so eloquently and seasoned his reluctance with such warm assurances of personal attachment to the Duke of Orleans, that his active services against Spain were dispensed with. He promised, however, to take up his quarters at Bordeaux in case of hostilities, and superintend the commissariat arrangements for the Duke of Berwick's army; and when the crisis came he performed this duty with great ability. His conduct was generally approved, and the King of Spain was much pleased with it.

For my own part, I heard of these warlike preparations with great regret, and often tried to dissuade the Duke of Orleans, who tried on his part to persuade me that they were merely precautionary, intended to bring pressure upon the Spanish Government to induce it to accept the peaceful proposals which had been submitted to it; and indeed for a long time he really thought so himself. But I had long been uneasy on the subject. It was clearly to the Abbé Dubois' interest to bring about a rupture with Spain, and he led his master into it by successive steps. One of the first of these was a proposal to grant subsidies to England and the Emperor, on condition that they declared themselves against Spain; these subsidies to be kept a dead secret. I spoke to the Duke of Orleans about it; he said

he would like to discuss the question thoroughly, and for this purpose he insisted, in spite of my remonstrances, on dragging me off to his private box at the Opera; just as he had done about the affair of the Constitution. There we had a long and earnest conversation, lasting till the opera was over; neither of us having seen or heard anything that passed on the stage. In the end we both of us retained our original opinions. Mine was that, as a rupture between France and Spain would be to the advantage of England and the Emperor, they would certainly allow the secret of the subsidies to leak out. It turned out just as I expected; the Spanish Government was promptly informed of the Regent's engagements with the Emperor and England; and at once set to work to provide him with domestic troubles, sufficient, as it was hoped, to keep him quiet.

Cellamare, the Spanish Ambassador, had long been scheming with this object, as may be seen from the passages extracted by Torcy from his letters to Alberoni; which I have already quoted. Their design was to cause a revolt throughout the kingdom against the government of the Duke of Orleans; they had not made up their minds what to do with him personally; but they intended to place the King of Spain at the head of French affairs, with a council and Ministers nominated by him; there was to be a Lieutenant of the Regency under him, who would in reality have been the Regent, and the person designed to fill this office was no other than M. du Maine. They looked for support to the Parliaments, to the entire province of Brittany and to all the old courtiers who during the late reign had become accustomed to the domination of Madame de Maintenon and the bastards. We shall see that the execution of this plot did not correspond with the importance of its object; it is true that they were forced to hurry it on before their measures were quite ripe, for a rupture between France and Spain was imminent, and it was essential that the outbreak of the revolt should be delayed as little as possible. They were discovered just as they were making their final arrangements.

Cellamare had to send to Madrid a letter relating to the plot, of such importance that he dared not entrust it even to his own couriers; he therefore asked the Spanish Government to choose the messenger themselves, requesting that it should be a person superior to a courier, of such a position

in life as would not be likely to arouse suspicion. The choice fell on a young Abbé named Portocarrero, and he was given, as a coadjutor, the son of Monteleon, late Spanish Ambassador in England, who had retired to The Hague. They were to meet in Paris, as if by chance, and return to Madrid together. Nothing could seem more natural than that two young men, one coming from Spain, the other from The Hague, should make each other's acquaintance at Paris, and travel together; and nobody would suspect that the Ambassador, with his own couriers at his disposal, would send an important despatch by them. It is probable, indeed, that the young men themselves did not know the consequence of the packet entrusted to them. They started in the first week of December, in company with a Spanish banker established in England, who had recently failed for a very considerable sum, and for whose arrest the English Government had obtained the Regent's consent.

I must here admit that I am very badly informed with respect to the whole of this important business; the Abbé Dubois, whose ascendancy over his master increased every day, insisted that no one else should be admitted into the secret; and, indeed, as we shall see, the Duke of Orleans himself knew no more about it than Dubois thought fit to communicate to him. I do not know whether the Abbé Dubois had corrupted some principal member of the Spanish Embassy, and found out in this way that the two young men were bearers of an important despatch; or whether he wished to please the English by arresting the fugitive banker, and merely ordered the detention of his companions lest he should have handed over his papers to them; however this may be, they were pursued and arrested at Poitiers. All their papers were at once sent to Paris; Dubois perused them hastily, and announced the news to the Duke of Orleans as he was leaving his box at the Opera. That was the hour at which he was accustomed to shut himself up for supper with his *roués*, and he did so on this occasion, saying in his usual easy-going fashion that Dubois could not have had time to examine the papers properly.

Now, early in the morning the Duke of Orleans was never in a fit state to transact business; his head was confused by the fumes of wine and the heavy supper he had eaten; the Secretaries of State have often told me that they could have made him sign anything they pleased at that time. Yet

that was the hour chosen by the Abbé Dubois to inform him of the contents of the papers seized at Poitiers! He did so after his own fashion; showing him such papers as he thought fit, but taking care not to leave any in his hands. The only persons whom Dubois took into his confidence, and that only to a very limited extent, were the Keeper of the Seals and Leblanc, whose assistance was indispensable to him. They were both entirely dependent on his good-will; he could therefore trust them to carry out his orders implicitly, and with absolute secrecy.

The news of the arrests at Poitiers reached Cellamare the morning after the arrival of the courier; but, as he still hoped that of the two young men might be due only to their unfortunate choice of a travelling companion, he concealed his uneasiness under a show of indifference, and went to Leblanc to demand the return of a packet which, he said, he had entrusted to them, confiding in the King's passport with which they were furnished. Leblanc replied that the packet had been examined, and, far from restoring it to him, he had orders to reconduct him at once to his own house, in company with the Abbé Dubois, who arrived immediately on the scene. The Ambassador realised that such an announcement would not have been risked without ample force at hand to carry it out; he remained perfectly cool, made no difficulties about getting into Leblanc's carriage, and the three drove off together to the Embassy. A detachment of Musketeers marched up as they arrived there, and took possession of the house.

Cellamare looked on with absolute tranquillity while his desks and despatch-boxes were being ransacked, a process which took more than three hours: during this time he treated Leblanc very civilly, but the Abbé Dubois with the utmost scorn and contempt. Once, when Leblanc was about to examine a small despatch-box, he said: "Leave that, M. Leblanc; that will not interest you; leave it to the Abbé Dubois; it contains nothing but letters from women, and he has been a pimp all his life!" Dubois dared not be angry, but affected to laugh. Apparently Cellamare was indulging in a gratuitous gibe: for he was quite an old man, and not in the least given to gallantry or debauchery: he went little into society, and then only with the object of keeping up relations with the party opposed to the Regent; most of his time was spent in reading.

The perquisition being at last finished, seals were affixed to all the rooms containing papers, and Dubois went off with Leblanc to report to the Regent. The Musketeers remained in possession of the Embassy, and du Libois, one of the King's gentlemen-in-ordinary, was left in charge of the Ambassador's person, such being the usual custom on such unfortunate occasions. He was a man of tact and ability, and had previously been entrusted with the same disagreeable duty.

I knew the same morning that some persons had been arrested at Poitiers; but nothing further till dinner-time, when a messenger arrived from the Duke of Orleans warning me to attend a meeting of the Council at four o'clock. As it was not the regular day I asked him in surprise what had happened; he was surprised in his turn, and informed me that the Spanish Ambassador had been arrested. On hearing this I left our guests and went at once to the Palais-Royal, where the Duke of Orleans told me all that I have just related; he said the Abbé Dubois had not had sufficient time to examine all the papers, but he had some specimens which he intended to lay before the Council. After some time spent in conversation I went to the Tuileries for the Council-meeting; I found most of the members already there, assembled in groups; considerably startled, as it appeared, by the arrest of the Ambassador, and not much inclined to approve of it.

The Duke of Orleans arrived soon afterwards. He was beyond all comparison the best natural speaker I ever met; he never had to prepare himself beforehand; he was always ready to express his exact meaning, in perspicuous and well-chosen language; and his manner while speaking was at once dignified and agreeable. On this occasion he informed us that the papers seized at Poitiers disclosed the existence of a dangerous plot against the State, of which the Spanish Ambassador was the chief promoter, and he had consequently thought it right to have him arrested. Such an arrest, he added, was not contrary to the law of nations, for the privileges of Ambassadors had never been held to cover conspiracies against the Government to which they were accredited; and he quoted several cases where they had been placed under arrest; he had, however, at once informed the other foreign ministers of what had occurred. He then ordered the Abbé Dubois to read two letters from

Cellamare to Cardinal Alberoni, which had been found among the papers captured at Poitiers.

The Abbé Dubois, after giving us a brief and disjointed account of what he had done at the Embassy, and dilating on the importance of what had come to light about the plot, read the two letters. They left no doubt that Cellamare was the leading spirit of the conspiracy, and that he had acted in concert with Alberoni; they contained some scandalous expressions about the Duke of Orleans, which gave great offence to the Council. The Regent then again addressed us, saying with great moderation that he did not suspect the King or Queen of Spain of being privy to a conspiracy of this nature; he thought it arose from the hostility of Alberoni, and Cellamare's desire to please him; and he should demand justice from Their Catholic Majesties. He wound up by saying that he should do his best to probe the business thoroughly, but till he knew more about it he would refrain from mentioning the names of any suspected persons. This speech was received with much applause; and I rather think that some of those present breathed more freely when they heard that no names were to be mentioned. In spite of this declaration, however, next morning, the 10th of December, Pompadour was arrested and sent to the Bastille; and several other arrests followed.

Tuesday was the day on which the foreign ministers were accustomed to present themselves at the Palais-Royal; and on the 13th, which was the first Tuesday after Cellamare's arrest, they all did so as usual. Copies of the two letters which had been read in the Council were handed to them, and none of them raised any protest. The same afternoon the Spanish Ambassador was sent in charge of a military escort to Blois, there to remain till news had been received of the safe arrival in France of the Duke de St. Aignan, French Ambassador at Madrid. Some days afterwards two Colonels of cavalry and several other officers were sent to the Bastille.

On Christmas Day the Duke of Orleans sent me word to be at the Palais-Royal at four o'clock. I found M. le Duc, the Keeper of the Seals, d'Antin, Torcy, and the Abbé Dubois also in attendance. We discussed several matters; among others, the best way of overcoming or evading the opposition of the Parliament about Law's bank; it had been declared a royal bank by proclamation, with the object of enhancing

its credit and authority ; and the Parliament had refused to register the proclamation. The Regent talked over these things so quietly that I never suspected that I had been summoned for any other purpose ; but when the others rose to go he kept me back with M. le Duc. After a moment's silence he asked me to go and see that there was no one in the next room, and that the doors were properly shut.

When he was quite sure that we could not be overheard he said we should not be surprised to hear that M. and Madame du Maine were seriously implicated in the conspiracy, of which he had had proofs in their own handwriting. He added that the Keeper of the Seals, the Abbé Dubois, and Leblanc were the only persons who knew this at present, and he had strictly enjoined them to mention it to nobody ; before doing anything, however, he had wished to consult M. le Duc and myself. I thought to myself that, as these three men were in the secret, he had no doubt already talked the matter over, and probably settled with Dubois what should be done ; but that he wished to pay M. le Duc the compliment of asking his advice. As for myself, perhaps he really wished to know what I thought ; besides, he always took me into his confidence when he was forced to make a prompt decision about anything.

M. le Duc without any hesitation said that M. and Madame du Maine ought to be arrested at once, and sent to some safe place where they would be out of mischief ; in which advice I fully concurred. The Duke of Orleans agreed ; but he laid some stress on the fact that Madame du Maine was a Princess of the Blood ; not so much, I fancy, because he really considered that an objection, as to make her nephew speak his mind clearly. If so, he was quite successful ; M. le Duc hated his aunt and her husband, as he had good reason to do ; he replied that the objection, if well-founded, should have come from him, but members of the Royal Family had often been imprisoned before, and the fact that Madame du Maine was a Princess of the Blood was an additional reason for arresting her. I supported him, and the Regent gave in without further difficulty.

The question of the destination of the prisoners was then discussed. The Bastille and Vincennes did not appear suitable, as offering too great a temptation for disturbances in Paris. It was agreed that they should be separated,

and Dourlens in Picardy was finally chosen for M. du Maine; it was under the government of Charost, for whose fidelity I could answer confidently. With regard to Madame du Maine, after some discussion, the Regent looked at M. le Duc with a smile, saying that he must come to the rescue, for the affair concerned him almost as much as himself; and immediately suggested the citadel of Dijon. M. le Duc replied that this proposal was rather strange; he agreed that Madame du Maine should be imprisoned in some very safe place, but the suggestion that he should become his aunt's gaoler was one to which he could hardly be expected to listen. But he said it with a smile, which encouraged the Duke of Orleans to persevere. M. le Duc turned to me and appealed to me to say whether he was not in the right. I replied that he was right certainly, but the Regent, from his point of view, still more so. The fact is, I thought it would be to the advantage of the Duke of Orleans to make M. le Duc his accomplice; and also that Madame du Maine could not be in a safer place than Dijon, in the midst of the province governed by M. le Duc. After a long resistance, inspired more by the thought of what people would say than by any real repugnance, M. le Duc gave in, and consented that his dear aunt should be placed in close confinement in his castle of Dijon; after which we separated.

On the two following days, the 26th and 27th of December, all the necessary arrangements were made with the strictest secrecy. But of course M. and Madame du Maine, alarmed by the arrest of the Spanish Ambassador, had taken good care to destroy all compromising documents. The Abbé Dubois had found out quite enough about them from the papers seized at Poitiers; if he had shown these papers to the Regent at once, and arrested M. and Madame du Maine at the same time as Cellamare, he would have taken them by surprise and captured all their important documents. But it was not to his interest to serve the State and his master too zealously; the scoundrel always thought of himself first.

On the 30th the Duke of Maine was arrested at Sceaux as he was leaving the chapel after Mass, and placed at once in a carriage under the charge of Favancourt, a Brigadier in the first company of Musketeers. He made no resistance, merely saying that he had been expecting such a compliment; that he was innocent; and that it was very unfortunate that the

Duke of Orleans should listen to the reports of his enemies, for he had always been sincerely attached to him. During the journey to Dourlens, which took two days, he said nothing, but sighed repeatedly, making signs of the cross and muttering prayers, with low bows to every church and cross which they passed on the way. I heard these particulars afterwards from Favancourt, whom I knew well, for he had taught me my drill when I was in the Musketeers.

Madame du Maine was at a small house in the Rue St. Honoré which she had hired, and converted into a rallying-place for her party, though her timid husband would not trust himself in it. Here she was arrested, on the same day, by Ancenis, son of the Duke de Charost. She was very angry, and made all sorts of pretexts for delay ; she wanted to carry off her despatch-boxes and her jewels, requests which were politely refused. At last Ancenis, taking her by the hand, told her civilly but firmly that it was time to start. She was placed in a carriage and driven off ; there was not a sign of excitement in the streets, at which she could not conceal her vexation ; but she shed not a single tear, merely protesting from time to time against the violence offered her. She questioned Ancenis about her destination, but he merely replied that she would sleep at Essones that night. He took leave of her next morning, and went to make his report to the Regent. Her uneasiness increased as she travelled farther and farther away from Paris, especially when she reached Burgundy ; but when she had to enter the castle of Dijon, and found that she was to be under the custody of M. le Duc, her fury knew no bounds. After a time, however, she saw that resistance was useless, and affected a disdainful indifference.

I heard of the arrests by a preconcerted message from Leblanc, and went at once to the Palais-Royal, where I found the Duke of Orleans very much disturbed at the thought of his approaching interview with his Duchess. I was very glad I was not on sufficiently good terms with her for him to think of making me again a messenger of evil tidings. I did my best to encourage him, and after about half an hour, the Count de Toulouse being announced, I took my leave. I heard afterwards from the Duke of Orleans that the Count de Toulouse had talked to him in a very straightforward manner. He said he had known nothing of the conspiracy, and His Royal Highness would never find him

mixed up in anything prejudicial to his service, or to the tranquillity of the State. He could not of course help sympathising with M. and Madame du Maine in their misfortunes, but he knew His Royal Highness would not have proceeded to such extremities without good reason; he still hoped, however, that his brother would prove to be guilty of nothing more than imprudence. The Regent was very much pleased at this proceeding on the part of a man whose truth and probity could be relied on implicitly. He said everything that was kind and civil in reply, and they parted good friends.

The Duke de St. Aignan had been for some time very unpleasantly situated at Madrid, owing to the growing ill-feeling between the two Courts, and Alberoni's personal hatred for the Duke of Orleans. That Minister indeed behaved so uncivilly to the Duke de St. Aignan, and talked in such a way of the Regent, that even persons about the Spanish Court who were least inclined to favour France were scandalised. At last our Ambassador, to his great delight, received letters of recall, and demanded an audience to take leave. Alberoni, however, who was expecting daily to hear of the outbreak of Cellamare's conspiracy, determined to retain him as a hostage; and kept putting off the audience on one pretext or another. Finally St. Aignan told him flatly that if he could not obtain a farewell audience he would go away without one; to which the Cardinal replied angrily that he would take good care to prevent him. St. Aignan kept his temper; but, guessing that there was some mysterious reason for detaining him at Madrid, he took his departure that very evening, and reached the foot of the Pyrenees before Alberoni could catch him. Having got so far in safety he thought it unwise to risk a journey in a carriage over the bad mountain roads; so he and his wife set off on mules for St. Jean-Pied-de-Port. At the same time he sent his valet and a maid-servant, both persons of intelligence, in his carriage to Pampeluna; with orders to pass themselves off as the Ambassador and his wife, and to make a great fuss if they were arrested.

It turned out just as St. Aignan had anticipated. The detachment sent in pursuit by Alberoni caught up the carriage almost immediately. The mock-ambassador and ambassadress played their part splendidly; their captors never suspected them for a moment, but kept them in

custody at Pampeluna, sending word to Madrid of their success. In the meantime M. and Madame de St. Aignan arrived safely at St. Jean-Pied-de-Port, and thence proceeded to Bayonne. From that place he despatched a courier to the Duke of Orleans, and also a letter to the Governor of Pampeluna, begging him to restore his carriage and servants. The Governor sent them to Bayonne at once. But when Alberoni heard of it he was beside himself with rage, and vented it roughly on those who had made the mistake.

Soon after the arrests of M. and Madame du Maine the salt-smugglers throughout the kingdom laid down their arms, and sued for pardon. This showed plainly enough who had been encouraging them, and for what purpose. I had often warned the Duke of Orleans that it was so ; and he now admitted that I had been right.

CHAPTER XII

1719

The Regent consults me as to war with Spain—My advice disregarded—War declared—The Prince of Conti—Forged pamphlets—"Philippics"—The King of Sardinia and the Jesuits—Lot of the Jesuits at the hands of their Society—Father Tellier's death—Treachery of the Duke de Richelieu and Saillant—The Duchess of Berry—Cardinal de Noailles forbids her the Sacraments—Last years and death of Madame de Maintenon—Madame de Orleans—The war opens with the capture of the Passages—A post near Bidassoa.

In the meantime the agreement between France, England, and the Emperor had become generally known; indeed Stair, Konigseck, and Dubois had taken care that the secret should leak out, in order to force the Regent's hand, and compel him to declare war against Spain. One day, when I had gone to the Palais-Royal to transact business with him as usual, he stopped me as I was laying my papers on his table, and said he wanted to talk over a more important matter, namely, his relations with England, the Emperor, and Spain. He explained the situation at some length, and said he was being strongly urged to take up arms. I reminded him of our conversation at the Opera, when I had warned him that the secret of the subsidies would never be kept; and used all the arguments I could think of to dissuade him from war. I saw that he was inclined to agree with me, but hampered by his weakness for Dubois, who was thinking of nothing but pushing his own fortunes.

At last I said: "If you could consult some prophet who had the gift of reading the future, and he predicted nothing but defeats and lost fortresses in a war which you were meditating, is it not true that you would desist? Now I say that in this case you would do equally well to draw back if he foretold a series of victories; for even the most successful war with Spain will weaken your own country and aggrandise our natural enemies—the same Powers who are now striving to draw you into the war. Moreover, you are putting a

severe strain on the obedience of the French people. They are accustomed to see the Crown pass in strict succession to the representative of the elder branch of the Royal Family; it is dangerous to afford them a pretext for saying that you are abusing your temporary power as Regent for your own personal interests; that you are wasting the blood and treasure of the people to purchase foreign support against Philip V's hereditary claim to the throne of France in the event of the King's death. And, granting that your success in the war is as complete as you could wish, what would your position be if the King of Spain should enter France unarmed, and appeal to the French people, declaring that he came to assume the Regency which was his by right of birth when he was no longer disqualified by absence; and to rescue his country from a Government which had so misused its powers? I cannot speak for others, but, though I would not tell it to any one else, I will tell you, Sir, what effect such an appeal would have on myself. I have been your friend from childhood, and you know how true a friend I have been; while I never had any acquaintance with the King of Spain, except that I have played at prisoner's base and other boyish games with him; I have no hope of advancement from him, or from any one but yourself; and yet I declare that, if matters came to that point, I would take leave of you with tears; I would go to the King of Spain, and tell him that I looked upon him as the legitimate Regent, the true representative of the royal authority till the King himself should be old enough to exercise it! If such would be the effect of his appeal on me, what could you expect from the people generally?"

The Regent seemed crushed by this forcible declaration; he sat for some time in silence, his elbows on his writing-table and his face hidden between his hands, as he always did when troubled in his mind. At last he said straight out that I was right, and that I had rendered him a great service by speaking as I had done. At this point we were interrupted by the arrival of M. le Duc; but he did not stay long, and when he left the Regent insisted on resuming our conversation. I told him I could say no more; I hoped I had already said enough to open his eyes to the wiles of Dubois, who for his own interests was trying to lead him over a precipice. He said I was quite right, and he would not break with Spain; adding that he would put Dubois into a dungeon

if he heard anything from him about the Cardinalate. I did my best to confirm him in this resolution, but I could not refrain from saying: "You agree with me now, Sir; but as soon as I leave you the Abbé Dubois will get hold of you again, and make you change your mind; he will give you no peace till he has forced you into a declaration of war!" He assured me that his mind was fully made up, and nothing should induce him to alter his determination; nevertheless, at the end of a week war was declared against Spain!

During that week I went several times to the Palais-Royal, and each time I was refused admission, a thing which had never happened to me before. I wrote twice to the Duke of Orleans, begging for an interview; the first letter remained unanswered, to the second he sent a verbal reply that he would send for me as soon as he had time to see me; then I gave it up as hopeless. On the day when the news became public he sent me word that he would see me when I pleased. I went to the Palais-Royal and found him looking very much ashamed of himself. We did not speak for some time; at last he said in a low voice: "What are we to say?" "Nothing at all," I replied; "the thing is done, and it is useless to talk about it; I trust it may turn out well for you. But I hope you will believe that no personal object would have induced me to run after you as I have done so uselessly during the past week; I am not in the habit of forcing myself where I am not welcome. My attachment to you and what I considered my duty to the State overcame my disinclination; you did not think proper to see me, and I wash my hands of the whole business; now let us talk of something else!" and I took my papers out of my pocket and laid them on his table. He sat down without a word, and all the time I was with him he treated me in the most affectionate manner; for my part I showed no ill-temper.

Dubois employed Fontenille to draw up the manifesto against Spain; it was extremely well-written, for Fontenille could not write badly, but the substance of it was wretched. Before it was submitted to the Council of Regency the Duke of Orleans summoned M. le Duc, the Keeper of the Seals, Dubois, Leblanc, and myself to examine it with him. I was surprised at his sending for me after all I had said against the war; M. le Duc was asked as a matter of form, and

Argenson and Leblanc as Dubois' acolytes ; but I do not understand why I was asked to make a fifth, unless Dubois wished to adorn his triumph with a captive, and show his master that he bore no ill-will against those who differed from his opinions. But perhaps the Regent, feeling rather ashamed of himself, showed me this little civility of his own accord. The manifesto was submitted to the Council of Regency two days afterwards, and approved of unanimously, like everything brought forward by the Regent. The public, however, was by no means pleased with it, and the declaration of war which followed was extremely unpopular.

A rumour got about that several new Marshals of France would be appointed, because the Duke of Berwick was the only one capable of serving in the field ; and all sorts of queer names were mentioned. Broglio, who had never seen service since Marshal Créquy's defeat at Consarbruck in 1675, took it into his head to ask for the bâton, on the ground that he was the senior Lieutenant-General. The Duke of Orleans merely laughed, and told him that Lausun was his senior. The fact is that Lausun, always ready for mischief, had already spoilt the chances of the supposed candidates by a sarcasm. He went to the Regent, and in the gentle, meek voice which he affected on such occasions, said it was commonly reported that he was about to appoint some useless Marshals of France, in which case he trusted His Royal Highness would not forget that he had been for many years the senior Lieutenant-General. The Duke of Orleans, who keenly appreciated malicious humour of this sort, burst out laughing, and promised Lausun that, if the case arose, his claims should not be overlooked. He told the story everywhere, to the great annoyance of the aspirants ; and Broglio in particular was covered with ridicule. The odd part of it is that five years later Broglio was really made a Marshal ; it is true that everybody laughed at the appointment : but he got what he wanted.

Many regiments commanded by persons of distinction were ordered to Bayonne to join the army commanded by the Duke of Berwick, whom the King of Spain never forgave. The Prince of Conti was made a Lieutenant-General, and given the command of the cavalry ; he turned out to be very unlike his father in bravery, and quite unworthy of the blood of Bourbon ; his name was a byword even among the private soldiers. His conduct in other respects did not

make amends for this; he showed himself extraordinarily greedy of money. He received 150,000 livres from the Government on taking up his appointment, besides a quantity of plate; yet he would not leave Paris till he was assured that he and his staff should travel to and from Bayonne at the public expense. Like all the Princes and Princesses of the Blood, he had received a quantity of shares in the Mississippi Company as a free gift, and out of these they made enormous profits. The only exceptions in the Royal Family were the Duke of Orleans' children, his mother, and his wife; though the latter did afterwards make some money by speculation in these stocks. Even the Grand Prior, whom the Duke of Orleans held in singular veneration as the most impious and debauched person he had ever met, came in for a share of the money that was being so freely distributed, as if he had been a Prince of the Blood; though some previous attempts of his to put himself on that footing had been snubbed.

On the 4th of February the Parliament issued an edict suppressing four pamphlets which had recently appeared. They were entitled: (1) "A Letter from the King of Spain to the King of France, written in his own hand, dated the 3rd of September 1718." (2) "A Circular Letter from the King of Spain to all the Parliaments of France, dated the 4th of September 1718." (3) "A Manifesto addressed by the King of Spain to the three Estates of France, the 6th of September 1718." (4) "A Petition presented to the King of Spain in the name of the three Estates of France." It did not require much acuteness to perceive that not one of them came from Spain, where they were disavowed; in all probability they were fabricated at Sceaux. The Duke of Orleans treated them with contempt, and they did no harm. But it was not so with a poem, entitled "Philippics," which appeared about the same time, and was distributed with remarkable celerity and in extraordinary numbers. It contained every insinuation, false or true, which hell could vomit against the Duke of Orleans; expressed in a really fine poetical style, with great cleverness and wit. Lagrange, formerly a page to the Princess of Conti, the King's daughter, was the author, and made no secret of it.

The Duke of Orleans wished to see it, but could not procure a copy; for nobody dared show it to him. He spoke to me about it several times, and at last insisted so strongly

that I was forced to bring him a copy ; but when he asked me to read it to him I told him that nothing should induce me to do so. So he took it and read it to himself, standing at the window of his little winter-room, where we were sitting. For some time he read on, making comments from time to time without seeming much affected ; but all of a sudden I saw his face change, and he turned towards me with his eyes full of tears, apparently almost fainting. " Ah ! " he said, " this is too much ! " He had come to the passage where the villainous author describes him as about to poison the King ; where he draws a touching picture of the youth and innocence of the King, and adjures the nation to save him from his barbarous murderer—all with the most consummate art and genuine poetical feeling. I took advantage of the Duke of Orleans' stupefied silence to try to get the paper away from him, but he would not give it up ; he broke out into just denunciations of such an execrable calumny and the most tender expressions of affection for the King ; and then insisted on reading to the end. I never saw a man so overcome by emotion ; I am sure that if those most prejudiced against him could have seen him at that moment they would have been overcome by his obvious innocence and genuine horror of the crime imputed to him. I was quite overcome ; and had the greatest difficulty in consoling him a little.

This Lagrange, who was a good poet but in other respects a perfectly worthless person, had insinuated himself into the circle at Sceaux, and become a prime favourite with Madame du Maine. She and her husband were quite aware of his loose mode of life, and mercenary rascality, which they turned to good account. He was arrested shortly afterwards and sent to the islands of Ste. Marguerite ; but he was released before the close of the Regency. He had the impudence to show himself everywhere in Paris ; and, while he was appearing at all the theatres and public places, reports were actually set on foot that the Duke of Orleans had had him put to death in prison ! That Prince and his enemies were equally indefatigable : the latter in spreading the most atrocious calumnies against him ; he himself in the exercise of a very misplaced and useless clemency.

The Archbishop of Mechlin, an ambitious and ignorant man, blindly devoted to the Jesuits, thought he saw in the affair of the Constitution an opportunity of gaining the

Cardinalate; he went into it with furious zeal, and hired writers less ignorant than himself to compose pamphlets which were published in his name. The Emperor, less easily taken in than Louis XIV, and having no Maintenon or Tellier at his elbow, strongly disapproved of the disturbance the Archbishop was making, and put a stop to it by a letter forbidding him to write or preach about the Constitution. The King of Sardinia had taken even better measures at the very outset of the affair. He sent for the Superiors of the Jesuits and told them that if he heard anything about the Constitution in his dominions he would banish every Jesuit from them. The good fathers said it was not they who had stirred up the question, and it was hard to be blamed for what others had done without their knowledge. The King said he would not argue the point, but they might depend upon it that if he heard a word on the subject they would all be packed off and never allowed to return; and with that he turned his back on them and left the room. The reverend fathers knew him to be a man of his word; and from that moment the Constitution was never mentioned throughout his dominions.

Father Tellier died about this time. It will be remembered that when the Duke of Orleans discussed the subject of his treatment with me I advised that, in recognition of the position he had held, a good pension should be given him; but that, for the sake of public tranquillity, a certain restraint should be placed on his movements. The Duke of Orleans highly approved of this suggestion, but did exactly the contrary: he gave him a small pension and unrestricted liberty. He quartered himself at first on his friend the Bishop of Amiens, and there showed himself a regular firebrand, engaging in all sorts of intrigues and cabals on behalf of the Constitution, in the Netherlands as well as in France. After a time he went himself to Flanders, to animate the zeal of his party, which was too mild for his taste; and there he made such a disturbance that the Bishop of Amiens received a sharp reprimand and he himself was confined at La Flèche. This tyrant of the Church found his position there intolerable.

The Jesuits, who are all spies upon each other, and very jealous of those in high authority in their Society, are also extremely ungrateful to such as are incapacitated for work by old age or infirmity, even when they have rendered the

greatest services. I have myself known three instances of Jesuits, friends of mine, who, after holding positions of great influence and responsibility, have been treated in the harshest manner. One had been for some years assistant to their General at Rome, at whose death he returned to their professed house at Paris, of which he had formerly been rector. He was over eighty years of age, but they lodged him in a garret under the tiles, there to end his days in solitude and privation. The second had been one of those proposed by the Jesuits for the office of confessor to the Dauphiness when Father Lecomte was dismissed. He had a long illness of which he ultimately died, during which they did not give him enough to eat; and for more than five months I sent him his dinner regularly every day, besides medical remedies. The third, who was very old and infirm, was treated in exactly the same way; at last he begged me, as a favour, to be allowed to live in my house at Versailles. He remained there for some months, and died a fortnight after his return to the Jesuits' house at Paris.

Such is the lot of all Jesuits, even the most distinguished, when they become useless; and such was the fate which overtook Father Tellier at La Flèche. He had made himself extremely unpopular in his Society while he held the post of Confessor; all the Jesuits trembled before him; even their General had to give way to his will. He was hated by them as a harsh, overbearing tyrant, full of self-importance, who delighted in making his subordinates feel his power. Now the tables were turned; he had become an object of contempt, and his new superiors took care to let him know it. This tyrant of the Church, who had ruled over his Society and almost ruled France, had fallen once more into the position of a private soldier in the ranks of the Jesuits; and it may be imagined what a hell it was for a man of his character. He could not bear it for long; he died within six months of his arrival at La Flèche.

About the beginning of April Madame du Maine was removed from Dijon to Châlons-sur-Saône for the sake of her health, at the request of Madame la Princesse, her mother, who was allowed to visit her there. At the same time the Duke of Orleans let it be known that he was in possession of four letters from the Duke de Richelieu to Cardinal Alberoni, promising to deliver up Bayonne, where his regiment was quartered, on condition that he was given

the command of the Guards. Saillant, whose regiment was also at Bayonne, was in the plot, and both were sent to the Bastille. If any one had told me then that within ten years I should be made a knight of the Order in the same promotion as M. du Maine's two sons, the Duke de Richelieu, Cellamare, and d'Alègre, I should have been very much astonished.

The Duchess of Berry was leading her usual life, made up of queer contrasts—suppers in the vilest company amid the most profane and indecent conversation, interspersed with frequent, though short, retreats to the Carmelite convent in the Faubourg St. Germain, where she submitted to rigorous austerity; the most shameless debauchery, and horrible terror at the thought of death and hell—when she suddenly fell ill. The truth must be told: she was with child by Rion. Madame de Mouchy was their go-between; but she and Rion were in love with each other, the Princess was their dupe, and they combined together to get as much out of her as they could. In short, they did what they pleased with her and her household, and used their power with the greatest insolence; even the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, who hated them, had to treat them with consideration. Madame de Saint-Simon, who was much liked by the household, and respected even by this impudent couple, held herself aloof from all this; she never saw the Duchess of Berry except on official occasions, and ignored all that was going on, though quite aware of it. The time of the Princess' confinement arrived; her heavy suppers, washed down by copious draughts of wine and liqueurs, were a bad preparation for it, and her life was in imminent danger.

Languet, the well-known parish priest of St. Sulpice, spoke to the Duke of Orleans about administering the sacraments to her. But it was not easy for him to obtain admission in order to make the suggestion. Though the nature of her illness was generally known she flattered herself that she could keep it secret; (for, though she took no trouble to conceal her debauched habits, she was indignant at the idea that any one should venture to make remarks about them); consequently, she had taken up her quarters in a little room with a back entrance by which the doctors and attendants came in; and no one else was admitted, not even her father or mother, except Rion and the Mouchy woman. There was another difficulty: the priest, who was

very strict in the performance of his duties, told the Duke of Orleans, in the presence of witnesses, that he would not administer the sacraments, nor suffer them to be administered by others, so long as Rion and Madame de Mouchy were present, not merely in the sick-room, but within the house itself.

The Duke of Orleans was much put out at this, and proposed to refer the matter to Cardinal de Noailles. The priest accepted this at once, saying that he would willingly obey the orders of his diocesan, provided that he had an opportunity to explain his reasons. The Duke of Orleans knew that Languet and the Cardinal were not on good terms, on account of the Constitution ; and perhaps he flattered himself that the Cardinal, to whom his good-will in that business was of some importance, would prove more amenable—if so, he was mistaken. Cardinal de Noailles came and discussed the matter with the priest and the Duke of Orleans ; the priest's protest had been made in public, so the Cardinal thought his decision should be so too ; he told the priest, before everybody who was present, that he highly approved of his conduct, which was such as he would have expected from a man of his piety and experience ; and, in order that there should be no doubt about it, he forbade him, as his Bishop, to allow the sacraments to be administered to the Duchess of Berry until Rion and Madame de Mouchy had been expelled from the Luxembourg.

In the meantime the Duchess of Berry had been informed that the administration of the sacraments was thought desirable, and she was momentarily expecting the entrance of the priest. The task of informing her of the Cardinal's decision was not pleasant ; the Duke of Orleans went to the door of the sick-room, and spoke through the half-opened door to Madame de Mouchy, who took his message to the Duchess of Berry, with such comments of her own as may be imagined. The reply was a flat refusal to agree to the conditions. The Cardinal told the Duke of Orleans that Madame de Mouchy was not a proper person to deliver his message ; it was his duty, as her father, to go in and exhort the Duchess of Berry. But he was far too much afraid of his daughter to do anything of the sort, and indeed he was hardly the right person to preach to her. The Cardinal then said he would go in himself, accompanied by the priest ; whereupon the Duke of Orleans, in real alarm lest such an entrance

should give his daughter a fatal shock, tried another colloquy at the door; with no better success than the first time. The Duchess of Berry became furiously excited, and broke into violent abuse of the hypocritical bigots who, she said, were taking advantage of her weak state to inflict a public disgrace upon her; she told her father he ought to have the Cardinal thrown down the stairs. Finally, the Cardinal went away; but the parish priest remained at the door of the sick-room for four days, being occasionally relieved by two other priests; at the end of that time, the danger being over, he raised the siege. The Duchess of Berry gave birth to a daughter, and made a slow recovery; she never forgave Cardinal de Noailles; but was more than ever under the spell of Rion and Madame de Mouchy, who made a fool of her, and turned her infatuation to their own profit.

It was about this time that Rion first thought seriously of marrying her. He was encouraged in this project by his great-uncle, Lausun, who was delighted at the prospect of a revival of his own romance with Mademoiselle. It was Lausun's theory that the only way to manage persons of the House of Bourbon was to bully and ill-treat them; he had practised this method successfully with Mademoiselle, and it was by his advice that Rion adopted the brutal treatment which often reduced the imperious Duchess of Berry to tears. Rion and the Mouchy woman had been considerably alarmed by the attempt to separate them from their mistress; the occasion might recur, and another time her terror of death and the devil might lead her to consent to it. A marriage between Rion and the Duchess of Berry would put an end to these apprehensions, and assure to him and Madame de Mouchy a continuance of their pleasant and profitable position. For the present, however, the scheme was only in its initial stage; it is not yet time to say more of it.

On the 15th of April the celebrated Madame de Maintenon died at St. Cyr. What interest this event would have aroused throughout Europe if it had occurred a few years earlier! Now it was probably unknown at Versailles, close by, until some time had elapsed; at Paris it passed almost unnoticed. I have already said so much about this too-famous woman that it is unnecessary to do more than describe her mode of life since the King's death. For thirty-five years, however, her influence had been so powerful

and so mischievous that any details of her life, even after her retirement from the stage, have a certain interest. She had the good sense to consider herself dead to the world after her retreat, and never again went beyond the precincts of St. Cyr ; she asked for nothing, for herself or for others ; and refused to see any one from outside, except a very few chosen friends. Madame de Caylus, Madame de Dangeau, and Madame de Lévi were admitted, but not very often ; the two latter sometimes stayed to dinner. Cardinal de Rohan came to see her every week ; as did M. du Maine, who always spent three or four hours with her. His visits were a source of great joy to her ; she used to embrace her "darling," as she called him, most affectionately, though he stunk abominably. The Duke de Noailles also came pretty often ; but she did not seem to care much for him, and still less for his wife, who, though her own niece, visited her but seldom, and then evidently only as a duty. Marshal de Villeroy was always welcome, when he could spare the time ; beyond that she saw no one, except a few fanatical Bishops ; Aubigny, Archbishop of Rouen, and the Bishop of Chartres, diocesan and Superior of St. Cyr.

When the Queen of England was at St. Germain she used to dine with Madame de Maintenon once a week. They sat in similar arm-chairs, on a footing of equality ; the dinner was served by the young ladies, who waited on them and afterwards brought them coffee. When the Queen rose to go she embraced Madame de Maintenon, who conducted her as far as the door of the room ; the young ladies were waiting in the antechamber and escorted the Queen to her carriage ; they were very fond of her, for she was always kind and gracious to them. But Cardinal de Rohan was their special favourite ; he never came empty-handed, but invariably brought them enough sweetmeats and pastry to regale them for several days. These trifles pleased Madame de Maintenon.

She always had six young ladies, and two or three elder ones, in attendance, changing them from time to time. Among the young was Mademoiselle de Rochechouart, to whom Madame de Maintenon took a great fancy ; she used to talk to her as freely as her age permitted, and, as she was intelligent and had a good handwriting, she employed her to write letters from dictation. Mademoiselle de Rochechouart did not leave St. Cyr till after the death of Madame

de Maintenon, whom she deeply regretted, though she left her nothing. A marriage arranged for her by d'Antin, her relation, with M. de Tibouville, did not turn out well; his conduct was such that she had to leave him and take refuge with her brother the Bishop of Évreux. They lived at no great distance from La Ferté; I saw a good deal of them; they often stayed with me for a month; and it was from Madame de Tibouville that I heard all about the last years of Madame de Maintenon.

As had always been her custom at Court, she rose and went to bed early. Her prayers lasted for some time; and sometimes she read a devotional book to herself. At other times she made her young girls read history to her, and amused herself by making them talk about it; teaching them in that way. She heard Mass from a gallery adjoining her room, and communicated twice a week, usually between six and seven in the morning.

Her dinner was simple, but delicate. Mornay and Bloin took care to keep her well supplied with game from St. Germain and Versailles; fruit was also sent her from the gardens. She usually dined alone, but occasionally she asked one or two of the ladies who waited upon her to sit down with her. Mademoiselle d'Aumale, an old maid, who had been with her a long time at the Court, was not one of the most favoured in this respect; she acted as a sort of governess to the young girls, and a separate supper was served for her and them. Madame de Maintenon herself never took supper; sometimes on very fine evenings when there was no wind she walked a little in the garden.

She appointed all the superiors and officials of the establishment at St. Cyr; nothing was done without her orders, and, though her manner towards the elder ladies was invariably gentle and polite, and she was always kind to the young ones, they all trembled before her. No Abbess, not even the Princesses who formerly held that position, was ever more punctually obeyed, feared, and respected; yet nearly all the inmates of St. Cyr liked her. She spent much of her time in writing letters to abbesses and superiors of religious communities, for her taste for looking after the spiritual concerns of others never left her; and, as she wrote in a singularly graceful and easy style, it amused her to dictate letters.

The downfall of M. du Maine at the *lit-de-justice* gave her

a severe shock. It is tolerably safe to presume that she knew all about this darling's plots and designs, and the hope of seeing them succeed kept her up for a time ; but when she heard of his arrest her courage failed ; she suffered from a slow fever which she could not shake off ; and she died at the age of eighty-three, in full possession of all her mental faculties. The regret for her death, which was not universal in St. Cyr itself, hardly extended beyond its precincts. Her so-called cousin, Aubigny, Archbishop of Rouen, was the only person I ever heard of who was silly enough to die of grief for her. The news of her death was such a shock to him that he fell ill, and followed her in a very short time.

Madame d'Orleans, the Regent's daughter whose wayward fancy had led her to become a professed nun at Chelles, found that, although she had gone there to obey, she could not get on unless she was allowed to govern. The Abbess, seeing the peace and discipline of her convent entirely destroyed, resigned on condition of receiving a pension of 12,000 livres ; and the young Princess was appointed in her stead. She soon became tired of her new position. Sometimes she was austere to excess ; at other times there was nothing of the nun about her except her dress ; she was a musician, a surgeon, a theologian, a directress, but all by fits and starts ; extremely clever in whatever she took up, she was incapable of persevering in anything. After a time she resigned her office, and at her request one of her best friends in the convent was appointed in her place. But even this arrangement did not suit her for long ; she left Chelles and took up her quarters in a fine suite of rooms in the Benedictine convent of the Madeleine at Tresnel. This adjoined a delightful house in which the Duchess of Orleans had settled after leaving Montmartre, and the ex-Abbess of Chelles spent a good deal of her time there. By degrees she returned to piety and more regular habits ; and her life became more and more edifying (though there was still a good deal of the Princess about her) till her death, which did not occur till several years afterwards. This has led me considerably beyond the scope of these Memoirs ; but I thought I might as well say what became of her.

The war was opened by the surprise and capture of Passages, a fortified port near the mouth of the Bidassoa, where Alberoni had established one of the principal ship-building yards for the Spanish Navy. Cilly, who com-

manded the expedition, seized the forts, burnt six vessels which were on the stocks, together with immense accumulations of timber and other stores, and entirely destroyed the dockyard. This success caused great delight in England, and made the Cardinal's Hat a certainty for Dubois; but the French people were by no means pleased, and showed their feelings so openly that the Regent was considerably embarrassed. The English Government was extremely jealous of the growing naval power of Spain under Alberoni, and its destruction was, so far as the English were concerned, the main object of the quadruple Alliance which had involved France in the war.

CHAPTER XIII

1719

Law and the Mississippi Company—I refuse the shares offered me, to the Regent's annoyance—He repays me the 500,000 livres spent by my father in defending Blaye—The Duchess of Berry's illness—Her character—The story of her rings—Her death—The Regent's grief for his daughter—Illness of Madame de St. Simon—Madame du Maine's confessions as to the plot with Spain—The Grand Prior sells his office and applies for a dispensation to enable him to marry—His death—Negotiations for a marriage between the Prince of Piedmont and Mademoiselle de Valois—Madame intervenes—Madame de Coigny—The Council of Regency discredited—My advice to the Regent—Speculation—The Abbé Dubois—Madame Tencin and her brother—Law's conversion to Roman Catholicism.

The excitement about Law's Mississippi Company was tremendous at this time. I do not profess to explain the stock-jobbing operations which went on, any more than the new-fangled jargon in which they were conducted; but immense fortunes were made all of a sudden, and people were tumbling over each other to secure Mississippi stock. Law was besieged in his house by applicants, who forced his door open, climbed in at the windows, and even came down the chimneys. People talked of money only in millions.

As I have already said, Law had a regular appointment with me at my house every Tuesday; and he urged me repeatedly to let him set aside some of this Mississippi stock for me; he said it would cost me nothing, and if I would allow him to manage the investment for me I should make a profit of several millions. So many people of all classes had made enormous profits by their own shrewdness that I have no doubt he would have kept his word, for, considering my confidential position with the Regent, it would have paid him to bind me to his interests, and he would sooner have enriched me than any one else. But I would have nothing to do with it; he then addressed himself to Madame de Saint-Simon, and found her equally inflexible.

He was so anxious that I should accept his offers that he asked the Regent to use his influence. He mentioned the subject to me several times, but I always eluded him ; at last one day he begged me seriously to accept some Mississippi stock from Law ; the more I resisted the more pressing he became ; in the end he became angry, and said I was giving myself airs ; when so many people of my own quality and dignity were running after the stock it was absurdly conceited of me to refuse what the King wished to give me (for everything was done in the King's name).

I replied that a refusal from such a motive would be silly and impertinent ; but, since he pressed me so urgently, I would explain my real reasons. They were that I had never heard of any one, since the time of King Midas, who had the gift of turning everything he touched into gold, and I did not believe that Law possessed it ; it seemed to me that his operations were simply a new sort of juggler's trick by which he transferred the property of Peter into the pockets of Paul ; and that if some people became rich it was out of the spoils of others. Sooner or later, I said, the whole thing would collapse, and an immense number of people would remain ruined ; for my own part, I abhorred the idea of enriching myself at other people's expense, and nothing would induce me to be mixed up in it in any way.

The Duke of Orleans hardly knew what to say to this, but he still kept harping on the impropriety of refusing the King's beneficence. At last I lost all patience ; I said such impertinent folly had never entered my head, and to prove it I would make a proposal which I should never have made but for his insistence, and which, indeed, had only just occurred to me. I went on to remind him of what I had formerly told him, how my father had ruined himself by the expenses he had incurred in defending Blaye against M. le Prince, in the civil wars ; how he had been blockaded for eighteen months, during which he had paid and fed the garrison, cast cannon, and entertained a body of five hundred gentlemen, entirely out of his own pocket, for he would not levy contributions on the country ; how, when the troubles were over, he had received by way of reimbursement government bills to the amount of 500,000 livres, not one of which had ever been cashed, though M. Fouquet was about to do so at the time when he was arrested. I said my father's expenditure incurred in rendering an important service to

the King had amounted to considerably more than that sum, not to speak of the loss of interest for so many years ; and if he would take these things into consideration, and order these government bills to be cashed, it would be an act of justice for which I should be extremely grateful. The Duke of Orleans consented at once, and spoke to Law about it next day. I brought in my bills by degrees, and as they were cashed they were burnt in the Duke of Orleans' room. It was with this money that I paid for my improvements at La Ferté.

The Duchess of Berry, though still so weak that she could hardly bear the journey, insisted on being moved to Meudon immediately after Easter. The Duke of Orleans confided to me that she had contracted a secret marriage with Rion, and that she was determined to announce it. I was not much surprised at the marriage, knowing how strongly she was impelled to it by the joint influences of passion and fear of the devil ; but I was extremely astonished that so haughty a person should think of proclaiming her *mésalliance* to the public. The Duke of Orleans was very much put out about it. Fortunately most of the officers under orders to serve on the Spanish frontier had already left, and Rion had only been allowed to remain on account of the Duchess of Berry's illness ; the Duke of Orleans thought that if he were out of the way it would be easier to obtain a postponement of the declaration, so he received a peremptory order to join his regiment without delay. The Duchess of Berry was extremely angry, but he had to obey. The Duke of Orleans had not yet been to see his daughter at Meudon, and when he did go there he had to submit to a violent scene. She told him she was her own mistress, a widow, rich, and quite independent of him, and insisted on announcing her marriage at once ; all her father's threats and affectionate entreaties could obtain was that she finally consented to a short delay.

People had begun to remark how seldom he went to see her ; to put a stop to such talk she asked him to a supper on the terrace of Meudon, in the open air. Her medical attendants remonstrated in vain, warning her of the danger of a chill in her delicate state ; it was for that very reason that she insisted, for she thought that an open-air supper would make people disbelieve the story of her recent confinement ; and she also wanted them to think that she was

still on affectionate terms with her father. But the doctors were right; she was taken ill that very night, and was in a very alarming condition for some time. When she was a little better she took a dislike to Meudon, attributing her illness, as invalids often do, to the locality; and insisted on being moved to La Muette. She was transported thither accordingly on the 14th of May, lying in her bed in a large carriage. She suffered great pain during the journey, and was very ill indeed after her arrival. She hoped that, owing to the proximity of La Muette to Paris, her father and mother would come more frequently to see her. She had been much hurt because Madame and the Duchess of Orleans hardly ever came near her; but it was her pride, not her affection, that was wounded; she had never cared much for either her mother or her grandmother, and now she was beginning to hate them on account of their opposition to her wishes. Indeed, she was beginning to hate her father for the same reason; but she hoped to bring him round; and, besides, she could not bear to feel that people noticed the diminution of her influence over him.

During the remainder of May and June she was in much the same condition, sometimes worse, sometimes better; but in July she grew rapidly worse, and on the night of the 14th she was so bad that the Duke of Orleans was sent for in haste. Madame de Saint-Simon also thought it right to go to La Muette, where she had rooms, though she seldom occupied them. She found the Princess in great danger; she had been twice bled, and her confessor had been sent for. She lived for a week longer; but I here interrupt the account of her last illness, to give a short description of her person and character. The subject is not very pleasant, but the Duchess of Berry was so much talked about during her short life that it is not without interest.

Her natural talents were very remarkable; when she chose, she could make herself extremely agreeable and amiable; her face and figure were striking and pleasing, though latterly she had become rather too fat. She talked singularly well, with a natural, easy eloquence peculiar to herself, expressing herself with remarkable clearness and grace. With such gifts what might she not have done with the King and Madame de Maintenon, who were only too anxious to love her! with the Duchess of Burgundy, who had brought about her marriage, and looked upon her as her

protégée ? with her own father, when Regent of the kingdom, who had eyes for nobody but her ?

Unfortunately the defects of her heart and soul, combined with a most ardent temperament, not only rendered her talents and accomplishments useless, but actually turned them into a deadly poison. The most unbounded pride and an absolute contempt for truth were in her eyes virtues in which she gloried ; religion was for her merely a subject on which she could show off her wit. I have already alluded more than once to her outrageous conduct to her husband ; to her horror of her mother's illegitimate birth ; to her contempt for her father, whom she had subjugated ; to her ingratitude towards the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy, to whom she owed everything ; to her hatred for all those who had helped to bring about her marriage, because, as she said, it was intolerable to her to be under an obligation to any one ; to the manner in which she disgraced herself by drunkenness and the most licentious conversation.

It was most amazing, considering her overweening pride, to see what people she admitted to her table. No man under the rank of Prince of the Blood was entitled to sit down with her, yet she used to ask such men as Father Riglet, a Jesuit, whose conversation was of the loosest, and other cads who would not have been admitted into any decent house ; she was often present at the suppers of the Regent's *roués*, and delighted to encourage them in blasphemous and indecent talk. Yet, though she took no pains to conceal her depravity, she was indignant that people should comment on it ; she said persons of her rank were exempt from criticism ; any one who indulged in it violated a most sacred right, and was guilty of a criminal and unpardonable want of respect. She had suffered much pain since the beginning of her illness, but nothing would induce her either to take the necessary precautions for the recovery of her health in this life, or to give a thought to the life to come. At last her parents and the doctors found it necessary to address her in terms such as are never used to persons of her rank except in the last extremity, and she consented to take remedies, both bodily and spiritual. She received the sacraments, and spoke about her past life and present condition, but still quite with the air of a Queen ; when the ceremony was over she boasted of her firmness, and asked the bystanders whether she was not dying courageously.

Shortly afterwards she dismissed them all except Madame de Mouchy, to whom she handed her keys; she told her to bring her ring-box, and immediately made her a present of it. This was not the first present she had given her by any means; hardly a day had passed since the beginning of her illness without a gift of some sort, money or jewels. The contents of this ring-case alone were worth more than 200,000 crowns; and, greedy as the Mouchy woman was, she was rather startled. Such was the reputation which she and her husband enjoyed that they were afraid they might be accused of stealing the box, and thought they had better mention the matter. It came to Madame de Saint-Simon's ears, and she thought it her duty to send word to the Duke of Orleans. Madame de Mouchy came up to her in the drawing-room with the ring-case, and told her what had occurred; Madame de Saint-Simon called up the other ladies to look at it, and told Madame de Mouchy in their presence that it was a very handsome present, so handsome indeed that she advised her to take it to the Duke of Orleans without delay, and ask what she should do with it.

Madame de Mouchy did not at all relish this advice, given in the presence of witnesses; however, she agreed to follow it. Accordingly, early next morning she went with her husband to the Palais-Royal, and asked for an audience. The Regent, who knew from Madame de Saint-Simon what they had come about, received them alone. Madame de Mouchy told her story; for all reply the Duke of Orleans asked where the ring-case was. She took it from her pocket; he opened it, looked carefully through it to see that nothing was missing, for he knew the contents of the case quite well; he then locked it up in a drawer, and dismissed them with a curt nod. They retired very angry and confused, and never appeared again at La Muette. The Duke of Orleans thanked Madame de Saint-Simon warmly for what she had done; he was so angry at the impudence of the Mouchys that he could not refrain from speaking his mind very plainly about them in the drawing-room at La Muette, to the great delight of all present, including the servants.

The absence of the Mouchy woman seemed to have a good effect on the Duchess of Berry; she never alluded to it, and soon afterwards she expressed a wish to receive the sacrament again. It was administered by the Abbé de Castries, her almoner; and it seems that she received it in a

very pious frame of mind, very different to the first occasion. She was now in such a state that the doctors were willing to try any remedy. An elixir composed by a man called Garus was much talked about at that time; he was sent for, but found the patient so ill that he said he would answer for nothing. However, he administered his remedy, and it appeared to succeed beyond all expectation. One thing he insisted on was that no other medicine should be given her, and the Duke of Orleans gave strict orders to that effect. But Chirac, seeing that the patient really seemed better, and not wishing an unorthodox practitioner to have all the credit, seized his opportunity while Garus was asleep on a sofa, and insisted on her swallowing a purgative, two nurses who were by her bedside not daring to remonstrate. From that moment the Duchess of Berry relapsed into a condition worse than that from which the elixir had roused her. Garus was very angry when he found out what Chirac had done, and there was a great row between them in the presence of the Duke and Duchess of Orleans. In the meantime the patient was rapidly sinking, though she did not die till nearly midnight. Chirac, seeing the death-struggle beginning, went up to the foot of the bed and with an ironical bow wished her a good journey; he then went off to Paris. Strangely enough, the Duke of Orleans went on treating him after this just as well as before.

When Madame de Saint-Simon saw that the end was approaching she sent and asked me to come to La Muette, to be with the Duke of Orleans in these painful moments; for there was nobody there to whom he could talk freely. He seemed pleased to see me, and asked me to take charge of all the necessary arrangements. The Duchess of Berry was now unconscious; shortly before she died the Duke of Orleans went into her room and stood by the bedside. But I would not let him remain there; I pushed him gently into a little room beyond, where there was nobody. The windows were open; he leant his head against the iron balustrade and sobbed so dreadfully that I was really afraid he would be suffocated. When he grew a little calmer he began talking of the misery of this world, and the short duration of earthly happiness. I took the opportunity to say things to him which God put into my heart, with all possible tenderness and affection; he received them well, and continued the conversation of his own accord. When we had been

there about an hour Madame de Saint-Simon came in, and told me gently that it was time for the Duke of Orleans to withdraw ; especially as there was no way out of this little room except through the sick-room. He was plunged in the most bitter grief, and I had great difficulty in persuading him to come away ; but at last I induced him to get into his carriage, which was ready, and he returned to Paris.

He was the only person who really grieved for the Duchess of Berry. Some of her household regretted her death because they lost their places, but those among them who had enough of their own to live on were easily consoled. To the Duchess of Orleans, though she behaved with propriety, it came as a relief ; and Madame took little pains to conceal her real feelings. Even the Duke of Orleans found some consolation before long ; fond as he was of his daughter, her domination had become a heavy yoke ; and he was now at ease with regard to the declaration of her marriage with Rion. This embarrassment would soon have become urgent ; for when the body of the poor Princess was opened it was discovered that she was again with child. Her brain was also found to be diseased. All this presaged nothing but trouble, if her life had been prolonged. She was buried with very little ceremony at St. Denis, on the 23rd of July. The day before the funeral the Duke of Orleans told me that Madame de Saint-Simon's pay as Lady of Honour, amounting to 21,000 livres, should be continued to her for life. I thanked him, and asked him as a further favour to grant the same boon to the other ladies of the late Duchess's household, to which he gave his consent.

As we have seen, the appointment had been forced upon Madame de Saint-Simon sorely against her will, and she had never been able to find an opportunity for resigning. She had always been treated with the utmost consideration, and allowed a great deal of liberty ; but she had thoroughly disliked her position, and could not help rejoicing when she was unexpectedly delivered from it by the death of a Princess only twenty-four years of age. But the extreme fatigue she had undergone during the Duchess's last days brought on a very dangerous illness ; for six weeks her life was despaired of, and it was two months more before she was really convalescent. During that time I nearly went mad with anxiety, and knew nothing of what was happening in the world. When she was a little better I asked the Duke of

Orleans to let us have some rooms in the new *château* at Meudon ; and he was so kind as to place the whole house, completely furnished, at our disposal. It is a delightful place ; we spent the remainder of the summer there, and several summers afterwards. We intended to see only our own friends there ; but unfortunately its proximity to Paris brought us swarms of visitors, so that the house was often quite full of guests, besides mere callers.

The secretary of Cellamare, who had at last obtained permission to return to Spain, was arrested on the way, and conducted to the castle of Saumur. Madame du Maine had at last begun to talk, and she confessed a good many things ; I daresay there were a good many more which she did not confess ; but I was never well-informed about this affair, and it is my firm belief that the Duke of Orleans, though of course he knew much more than I did, was kept in the dark by the Abbé Dubois. However, this much is certain : Madame du Maine admitted in writing that the conspiracy was a real one, designed to overthrow the Duke of Orleans and make the King of Spain nominally Regent ; the support of a strong party in Brittany had been secured by promises that the King of Spain would restore the privileges enjoyed by the provinces up to the time of Anne of Brittany, and Port-Louis was to be placed in his hands to enable him to land troops in France ; the Duke de Richelieu, with Saillant's assistance, was at the same time to make himself master of Bayonne. She spoke with great contempt of Pompadour and other persons who had been arrested ; but admitted that Laval was one of the mainsprings of the conspiracy, through whom passed all communications between herself and Cellamare ; he was also employed to manage the party among the nobility who favoured their designs.

Laval, who was in the Bastille, was interrogated about these avowals. He was furious with Madame du Maine, calling her all sorts of names ; he said she was the last person he would have thought capable of betraying her friends, and it was she who had induced him to take part in the conspiracy. In his anger he let out a good many more particulars, but for the most part they did not come to my ears. One odd circumstance became known : the Duchess of Maine went one evening, after supper at the Arsenal, to have a private consultation with Cellamare ; she took no

servants, but one or two trusty attendants, and Laval drove, disguised as a coachman. On the way the wheels of their carriage became locked with those of another, for they had no lights; and they had great difficulty in getting clear; in a mortal fright all the time lest they should be recognised.

Madame du Maine's confessions caused the arrest of Cellamare's secretary, and also procured a relaxation of their imprisonment for herself and her husband. A sort of comedy now went on between the pair. Madame du Maine declared that, owing to her husband's timidity, he had never been admitted into the secrets of the plot; and that one of her greatest difficulties had been to keep him in the dark; several times, indeed, their plans had been delayed, and important meetings postponed, for this reason. He, on his side, declared that he had known nothing of what was going on, though, he said, he must have been an idiot not to have suspected something; he thought the scheme detestable, and expressed himself very bitterly against his wife and those who had drawn her into it. The Duke of Orleans told me all this himself; he was much amused by the comedy got up by M. and Madame du Maine, and laughed at the manly fears of the husband. As for his wife, he said he had no doubt that she trusted to her native wit, and to the privileges of her sex and exalted birth, to come out of the business with flying colours. I replied, rather contemptuously, that I would bet on her success, for nothing was easier than to persuade a man who was only too ready to be talked over. Then I began talking of something else. He felt that I was right, but he was completely under the yoke of the Abbé Dubois.

At this time he suggested to the King that he should take the house at La Muette into his own hands, and use it for pleasure parties. The King was charmed with the proposal; the idea of possessing something of his very own was delightful, and he was immensely proud of having his milk, fruit, and vegetables sent from La Muette. He often went there, to amuse himself with such things as do amuse a child of his age.

The Chevalier de Vendôme, Grand Prior of France, so often mentioned in these Memoirs, had squandered his own fortune; and the property of the Order of Malta in his charge had been so seriously deteriorated that he was threatened with proceedings. About this time, with Law's

assistance, he arranged to sell his office of Grand Prior, for a very high price, to an acknowledged natural son of the Regent by Madame d'Argenton. The bargain was soon concluded, for none of the parties to it had any more scruples than if it had concerned an ordinary sale of land or property ; and the Grand Master of Malta was not in a position to say "no" to a Regent of France.

Not content with this, however, the Chevalier de Vendôme wanted to obtain a dispensation from his vows, to enable him to marry ; for, in spite of all rebuffs, he looked upon himself as a Prince of the Blood, and took it into his head that he would like to leave posterity to carry on his line. There was considerable difficulty about this ; but at last, by the Regent's influence, he succeeded, on condition that he renounced all claim to the property of his late brother, the Duke de Vendôme, which had passed to his widow, daughter of the late M. le Prince. He then looked out for a wife ; but, while he was under the impression that no match was good enough for him, nobody would have anything to say to an old drunkard, sixty-five years of age, all rotten with pox, with no money except what he had accumulated by plunder ; and without a single redeeming quality, unless consummate impudence may be regarded as such. So after a time he had to give up his ridiculous quest ; he continued his ordinary mode of living, which indeed he was incapable of quitting, and died a very short time after this last appearance in public.

About this time Pleinœuf made an arrangement with his creditors and returned from Turin, whither he had fled to avoid prosecution for a fraudulent bankruptcy. He was the father of the too-famous Madame de Prie, who afterwards became M. le Duc's mistress, and governed him completely while he was Prime Minister, to the great disadvantage of the country. I merely note this in passing, for Madame de Prie's baleful ascendancy was after the period assigned to these Memoirs, which I do not intend to carry beyond the death of the Duke of Orleans. But I have already mentioned that Pleinœuf, a shrewd, insinuating person, had contrived to obtain such a footing at the Court of Turin that he was entrusted with the negotiations for a marriage between the Prince of Piedmont and Mademoiselle de Valois, the Regent's third daughter.

The Duke of Orleans instructed me, sorely against my

will, to carry on the correspondence with Pleincœuf. When the Abbé Dubois returned from England I shifted all the responsibility on to him, for I knew he would resent my having anything to do with the business; and, moreover, I saw that the Regent was not particularly anxious that the marriage should come off. The Duchess of Orleans, on the other hand, had set her heart upon it, and she did not at all like Dubois' interference; for she guessed, quite rightly, that he would cause the negotiations to fail. His one object at this time was to conciliate the Emperor, through whose good offices he hoped to obtain his Cardinal's Hat; and he intended to put him in possession of Sicily, giving the King of Sicily the island of Sardinia as a meagre compensation, to enable him to retain the title and rank of King. He did not care to promote the marriage of the Prince of Piedmont when he was just about to despoil his father; so he purposely let the negotiations transpire, hoping that when they came to Madame's ears she, in her downright German way, would do something which would put a stop to them. He knew her character well, and it turned out just as he expected.

Madame was truth, honesty, and candour personified; one of her failings was that she carried these virtues rather to excess. The chief occupation of her life was writing letters to her numerous relations; among others she corresponded regularly once a week with the Queen of Sicily. On this occasion she did not hesitate for a moment; she wrote to the Queen to say that she heard of a projected marriage between the Prince of Piedmont and her granddaughter; that she was too fond of her to let her accept such a daughter-in-law without enlightening her as to her character; she therefore informed her, etc., etc.—telling her all that she knew, or thought she knew, about the young lady. When the letter had been posted and was well out of reach, she told the Duke and Duchess of Orleans what she had done. The Duchess was furious; but the Duke, who had never cared much about the project, only laughed. Dubois also laughed still more heartily at the success of his ruse; for the marriage was broken off at once.

Six weeks later, the Duke of Orleans, who had no reason to be particularly fond of Mademoiselle de Valois and very good reasons indeed for wishing to get rid of her, announced her engagement to the eldest son of the Duke of Modena.

Unfortunately everybody knew why he was in such a hurry to part with her, and why he was content with such a poor match. I could not refrain, however, from reproaching him a little. "Why does not she deserve a better?" he replied; "any marriage for her is good enough, so far as I am concerned, provided that I get rid of her." The son of one of the most petty Princes in Italy was, in fact, a very poor match for her; especially as he would have to wait a long time for his succession, and his father was notoriously ill-tempered and tyrannical.

Madame de Coigny died at a great age. She was a sister of the Count de Mattignon, Knight of the Order, and of Marshal de Mattignon. Her parents had married her, much against her will, to Coigny, who was very rich; the unfortunate part of it was that he lived near the Mattignons, and everybody in Normandy knew all about him. His name was really Guillot, and at the time of his marriage there were plenty of people who had known his father and grandfather as petty lawyers. They became wealthy, and in time could aspire to this alliance with the Mattignons. Coigny himself was a worthy and honourable man, a good soldier, who never presumed, and deserved the friendship which his brothers-in-law showed him; we have seen how he refused a Marshal's bâton without knowing it, by declining to take the command in Bavaria. He almost died of grief when he found out what he had done. He did more than his father or grandfather to push the fortunes of his family; he bought a property belonging to the ancient family of Franquetot, which had become extinct, and obtained letters-patent authorising him to assume the name of Franquetot in lieu of his own. These letters-patent were registered by the Parliament of Rouen; so that his real name, and consequently his original plebeian position, remain on record to all time. What would this Madame de Coigny of whom I am speaking say if she could revisit this world and see the heights to which her son has attained? She would either faint with terror or die on the spot from excess of joy.

Marshal Berwick, after taking Fontarabia, which offered little resistance, laid siege to San Sebastian; the Spanish army was not strong enough to interfere, and the town capitulated on the 1st of August.[1] The castle held out for

[1] The progress of Wellington's siege of San Sebastian was somewhat retarded because Major Smith, his engineer officer, being unacquainted

a fortnight longer. At the same time a detachment seized Santona, and burnt three large Spanish ships of war which were on the stocks, ready for launching. After this Marshal Berwick marched into Roussillon, where he took Seu-d'Urgel and a number of petty fortified posts, the Spanish army under Prince Pio looking on helplessly. This ended the campaign.

Besons, Archbishop of Rouen, was appointed a member of the Council of Regency, and the Abbé Dubois, who had hitherto attended its meetings only in his capacity of Secretary for Foreign Affairs, also became a regular member. This Council had now fallen into complete discredit; it had become too numerous; only formal business came before it, everything of importance being settled in the Regent's private room, between himself and Dubois. All the other Councils had been abolished entirely. I had a long conversation with the Regent on this subject; pointing out what a handle he was giving to those discontented with his government, for anything that went wrong would be imputed to himself personally, and it would be easy to prejudice the King's mind against him in the near future.

He was always ready to admit mistakes when he had made them; unfortunately, he was not equally willing to correct them. He said I was quite right; but really the composition of the Council of Regency was such that it was impossible to lay important business before it. I laughed, and asked whose fault that was, and whose fault it was that the other Councils had got into the state of confusion which had led to their abolition. "It is entirely my own fault," he said, laughing; "I quite admit it; but the mischief is done, and what remedy is there?" I said I could suggest one, but if it was to do any good he must make up his mind to disregard the personal interests of people who certainly would not show much consideration for him in return; and also he must avoid the good-natured weakness which had ruined the Council of Regency.

My suggestion was that he should appoint a small private council, consisting of not more than four persons besides himself, whom he should consult on all important business.

with the history of the previous siege, selected the very same breaching-point as Marshal Berwick had done in 1720. This happened in 1813 to be the strongest spot in the whole wall, because Berwick's breach had been very substantially repaired after his siege.

I said everybody would prefer such a council to seeing him with the Abbé Dubois for his sole adviser; in making his appointments he would not be hampered as he had been when selecting the members of the Council of Regency; plenty of time had elapsed since the King's death to enable him to judge what persons were likely, from their character and capacity for business, to be of use to him; I begged him, therefore, to make his choice deliberately. To convince him that I was quite disinterested in giving this advice, I added, I would tell him at once that I had no wish to belong to this council myself, and would decline a seat in it if he offered me one.

He made no reply for some time, but walked with me up and down the gallery in silence, with downcast eyes, as he usually did when perplexed about anything; at last he said that it was not a bad suggestion, and he must think it over. "Think it over by all means," I said; "but do not think too long; the arguments in favour of my proposal are obvious; I do not see what can be said against it. What you have to do is to come to a decision, and stick to it." I left him looking very thoughtful and ill at ease; he knew quite well that the growing influence of Dubois was very unfavourably regarded by the public; but he also knew that Dubois would deeply resent the appointment of such a council as I had suggested, and Dubois was his master. For my own part, I never expected that my proposal would come to anything; but I thought it my duty to make it.

Money—I mean Law's banknotes which were generally preferred to specie—was in such abundance at this time that 4,000,000 livres were paid to the Elector of Bavaria, and 3,000,000 to Sweden, these sums representing, for the most part, debts of long standing. The market for shares in the Company of the Indies, generally known as the Mississippi Company, had been established for several months in the Rue Quincampoix. Such crowds thronged to it that the street had to be closed to all wheeled traffic; guards were placed at each end of it; bells were rung and drums beaten to announce the hours of opening and closing; and it was strictly forbidden to resort to it on Sundays and feast-days. Speculation in these shares had become a perfect mania, quite unprecedented up to that time; they were now at an enormous premium, and people were tumbling over each other in their hurry to convert houses and lands into paper.

The effect of all this immense issue of paper was that the price of even the commonest articles rose so that nobody could buy them. Every head was turned. Foreigners were jealous of our prosperity, and tried to get a share in it; even the English, usually so knowing in anything relating to banks, companies, or commerce, were taken in; and had good reason to repent of it before long.

Law, though a cool-headed man, began to tire of being in a subordinate position, and aspired to something better. In this he had the good-will of the Regent and the Abbé Dubois, but there were two serious obstacles in his way: he was a foreigner and a heretic. To become naturalised he must first abjure his heresy, so somebody must convert him; and that somebody must not be over-scrupulous. The Abbé Dubois fortunately could lay his hand on exactly the man he required; it was the Abbé Tencin, whom the Devil (who sometimes departs from his usual rule and rewards his followers, in order to entice others to serve him) has since raised to an astonishing pitch of fortune. He was a beggarly priest, son of a President in the Parliament of Grenoble. His sister, a handsome and amiable person, was a nun in a convent close to that town, remarkable for the laxity of its discipline and the facility with which visitors of both sexes were admitted; Cardinal de Camus had tried in vain to bring it into better order.

Madame Tencin availed herself to the full of the privileges allowed her; but after a time she found it irksome even to wear a nun's dress, and not be able to go out without leave; moreover, it became necessary for her to go into hiding for a time, to conceal the result of her conduct; so on some pretext or other she left the convent, with the firm intention of never returning to it. She took refuge with her brother the Abbé, to whom she was much attached from conformity of character; they were one heart and one soul—so far, at least, as they could be said to have any heart or any soul. This worthy couple led a vagabond and debauched life together for some years, and finally settled at Paris, where her wit and pleasant manners gained them some friends. She was known as Sister Tencin, and some of her adventures under that name became notorious; but, though a professed nun, who had quitted the veil without permission, she was lucky enough, with her brother's help, to escape persecution.

Towards the end of the late King's reign they contrived to obtain leave from Rome for her to change her condition, and instead of being a nun she became a canoness ; I do not know of what place, but, wherever it was, she never went to it. Soon after the King's death she became the mistress of the Abbé Dubois, and the confidante of most of his secret designs. So long as he had to observe some show of decency they concealed their connection ; but after he became an Archbishop and a Cardinal she lived with him openly, entertained visitors, and was looked upon as the fountain-head of all favours. She introduced her beloved brother to Dubois, who soon perceived that he was the very man he wanted for many purposes ; and it was to him that he turned when the question of Law's conversion arose. Tencin had already made Law's acquaintance, for Law, knowing the sister's influence over Dubois, had allowed her to extract a quantity of shares from him for her brother's benefit, which he was shrewd enough to convert into gold at the earliest opportunity. They were on these terms when it became necessary to bring into the fold of the Church a Protestant, or Anglican—for Law himself hardly knew what he was in the way of religion. As may be supposed, the good work did not take very long, though they had the sense to leave the conversion doubtful for a time, to save appearances.

Soon after this, Tencin was chosen by Dubois to go to Rome on a secret mission about his promotion to the Cardinalate. He was threatened at this time with a prosecution for simony, and for the embezzlement of part of the money received for the sale of a priory. He might have compounded the affair ; but, as his confidential relations with the Abbé Dubois were now well known, he never dreamt that his accuser would dare to carry the matter to extremities, or that the Parliament of Paris would condemn him if he did ; so he resolved to face it out. The case came on in the " Grand Chamber," and, as it had aroused a good deal of curiosity, the court was crowded. The prosecuting counsel cleverly drew Tencin's lawyer on till he extracted from him a flat denial of the simoniacal bargain. Then he asked whether Tencin, who was present, would swear to the truth of this denial. This seemed to Tencin too good a chance to be lost ; he thought he had only to swear that the charge was untrue, and he would win his case ; he asked permission to speak, and with considerable eloquence de-

clared that he was the victim of calumny, that he had never had anything to do with the sale of the priory in question, and consequently that the charge of embezzlement fell to the ground. The prosecuting counsel asked if he would swear to the truth of what he had just stated; Tencin said he was ready to do so, and was only awaiting the permission of the court.

"Then I will not trouble you any further," said the lawyer, "but I will ask the court to examine this document," producing a paper which he had hitherto concealed in his sleeve. It was the original deed of the sale of the priory, signed by Tencin; and it contained particulars which proved not only the simony, but the embezzlement. When it was read out the Judges were indignant at Tencin's impudent rascality, and the whole audience hooted him; he tried to bolt, but the prosecutor, anticipating that he would fall into the trap prepared for him, had provided three or four able-bodied fellows, who quietly surrounded the Abbé and kept him in his place. In the meantime the First-President had consulted the other Judges; addressing Tencin in the severest terms he could think of, he sentenced him to a heavy fine, and to pay all the costs of the prosecution—a sentence which in the eye of the law is infamous and degrading. Again the audience hooted and jeered at Tencin, who was allowed this time to make his escape.

Any one but the Abbé Dubois would, after this, have looked out for another agent to send to Rome; but he thought it would be difficult to find another combining Tencin's peculiar talents with morals and tastes so exactly in conformity with his own; so he hurried him off next morning, thinking that, the sooner he went, the sooner the scandal would die out. No doubt Dubois was right; he did not expect the Cardinalate as the reward of merit and virtue, and the negotiator he had chosen was just the man to make the best use of the gold, the intrigues, and underhand methods by which he hoped to attain his ends. Law, however, was very much distressed at the infamous scandal caused by the Abbé Tencin; he felt that it did no great honour to his own conversion, which had already been the subject of much comment.

CHAPTER XIV

1719

Fleury—Gaignières' portraits—Downfall of Cardinal Alberoni—He carries off the will of Charles II—The title-deed to the Spanish dominions—The little King's dislike for Dubois—The Regent and Marshal de Villeroy—The Regent wishes to appoint me in the Marshal's place—I refuse and give my reasons for so doing—The Abbé d'Entragues—Squabbles between Law and Argenson over the finances—Law appointed Controller-General of Finance—Law and the Prince of Conti—The King's ballet—I urge the formation of a Council, on the Regent—Noirmonstier—Cardinal de la Trémouille and the Abbé d'Auvergne's tricks—Peace with Spain concluded—Marriage of Mademoiselle de Valois with the Prince of Modena.

I MUST now say a few words about my relations with Fleury, Bishop of Fréjus. I had known him slightly for a long time; we had some common friends, but the society which he frequented during his visits to the Court was different from mine, so that we did not see much of each other; still there was no dislike on either side; on the contrary, when we did meet it was with reciprocal politeness. The last time he came to Court before the late King's death we met more frequently at Madame de St. Geran's house, and he seemed rather inclined to cultivate my acquaintance; at that time he was seeking the appointment of tutor to the Dauphin, and he thought apparently that I should be a person of some influence under the Regency, which was evidently near at hand. When he returned as tutor, having resigned his see, it happened that we saw very little of each other for some months, partly owing to the King being at Vincennes; I had some reason to think that this did not satisfy M. de Fréjus.

I think I have mentioned that Madame de Lévi had a good deal to do with his appointment as tutor. She was a very clever woman, but apt to take strong likes or dislikes; she had formed an attachment for the Bishop of Fréjus which really went to the verge of madness; but it

must be said that there was nothing scandalous about it, for she was a truly pious and virtuous person. As the daughter of the late Duke de Chevreuse, she was on the most friendly and intimate terms with Madame de Saint-Simon and myself. I was sitting with her one evening when she began talking about the Bishop of Fréjus, and reproached me with not liking him. I said I was surprised to hear her say so, for really I had no reason either to like or dislike him ; I had never seen much of him, and, owing to circumstances, less than ever since the beginning of the Regency. This did not satisfy her ; she returned to the charge on subsequent occasions ; and I began to see that she was acting in concert with M. de Fréjus. I always spoke well of him to her, indeed I had no reason to do otherwise ; and the end of it was that he approached me himself, with great politeness ; we had a brief conversation one day in the King's room, and shortly afterwards he came to my house about dinner-time and asked if he might dine with me. After that he came to me, and I used sometimes to go and see him in the evenings. He was a pleasant, agreeable man, having passed his life in the best society ; and talked well ; as our acquaintance became more intimate we began to discuss serious subjects in our conversations.

I was with him one evening, as he was sitting by his fireside in his dressing-gown and nightcap, when a servant came in with a parcel. It was very late, and I rose to take my leave, so that he might open his parcel ; but he stopped me, saying that it was only a parcel of themes for the King, which he got the Jesuits to compose for him. I may say that he was quite right to accept their assistance, for his own learning did not extend much beyond the subjects usually discussed in society. I asked him, in a rather disapproving tone, whether he meant to stuff the King's head with Latin. He said "No, only just enough to prevent him from being entirely ignorant of the language."

Continuing the subject, we agreed that a knowledge of history, especially that of France, was the most essential thing for the King to acquire. Thereupon an idea came into my head, which I mentioned immediately, for arousing his curiosity and giving instruction and amusement at the same time. Gaignières, a learned and judicious collector, had got together an immense number of portraits of persons who had figured in French history since the time of Louis XI,

together with a certain number of foreign personages. I had often seen them, or rather, some of them, for the number was so enormous that there was not room in Gaignières' house, though a very large one, to display them all. On his death-bed he had bequeathed the whole of this interesting collection to the late King. Adjoining the King's rooms at the Tuileries was a spacious gallery, used only by Marshal de Villeroy's servants. I suggested that these servants should be lodged elsewhere, and the gallery hung with Gaignières' portraits, which were now rotting in some out-of-the-way depository. I thought the singularity of the costumes would arouse the King's curiosity, and that M. de Fréjus might avail himself of it to impart a knowledge of many historical events without his pupil finding out that he was receiving a lesson ; and later on the sight of these portraits would recall to his memory what he had heard about them.

M. de Fréjus seemed to like this notion, but he never did anything to carry it out ; Marshal de Villeroy's servants continued to sleep in the gallery ; and from that moment I knew what to expect from M. de Fréjus' management of the King's education. Our intimacy, however, continued ; and up to the time of his death he used to talk to me, with a frankness which always astonished me, about people and public affairs. But the talk was all on one side ; I was merely a listener ; he never asked my advice, nor showed the slightest wish to bring me back to the Court and public life. In that I met him half-way, for I desired it no more than he did himself. This is enough concerning him at present ; what I have said is sufficient to throw some light on matters which I shall have to mention later on.

I have now to record a remarkable event, the sudden downfall of Cardinal Alberoni. It is unfortunate that Torcy did not carry his notes of the information obtained by opening letters in the post-office down to this epoch ; the more unfortunate because the Duke of Orleans was now so completely under the influence of Dubois that he no longer took his friends into his confidence, and the interval between Dubois' death and his own was so short that I had not time to question him much. I prefer to confess my ignorance rather than record my own conjectures, which would be of little more value than a romance ; if these Memoirs ever see the light I do not wish to deceive my readers, and I warn

them that henceforth they will be deprived of much curious information about public affairs. I can only set down what I saw myself, or what I heard on trustworthy authority.

Alberoni, influenced no doubt mainly by personal greed and ambition, had conceived vast schemes; he intended to deprive the Emperor of all the territory in Italy formerly possessed by the Spanish branch of the house of Austria; and especially to recover the island of Sicily, which by the treaty of Utrecht had been handed over to the Duke of Savoy. To prevent the Emperor and the King of Sicily from receiving assistance from France and England, he had lent assistance to the Duke du Maine's conspiracy against the Regent, and had endeavoured to send King James to England, to stir up civil strife in that country. These plots failed; and his prodigious preparations for war had so exhausted Spain that she was in no condition to undertake a struggle in Italy against the Emperor, supported by the united Powers of Europe; nevertheless, he was still determined to carry on the war with France. He had obtained complete ascendancy over the King and Queen of Spain, whom he had contrived to isolate from the outer world to such a degree that they heard nothing but what he chose to tell them. But this had rendered him extremely unpopular in Spain; he was looked upon as a firebrand by the Emperor, the Pope, and the King of England; while the Regent and Dubois regarded him, with good reason, as their personal enemy.

Among the Queen of Spain's personal attendants was a woman named Donna Laura Piscatori, a native of Parma, who had formerly been her nurse, and whom she had made her *assafeta*—that is, her first woman of the bedchamber, a much more dignified appointment in Spain than it is in France. Donna Laura, though she had retained the appearance and manners of a peasant, was a clever, shrewd woman, and had acquired considerable influence over her mistress. Like nearly all persons of her class, she was greedy of money. The Regent and Dubois bribed her to undermine Alberoni's influence, which she was the more ready to do because she knew that Alberoni was jealous of her, and feared lest he should contrive to have her sent back to Parma. She kept on hinting to the Queen that Alberoni had embroiled their Catholic Majesties with the whole of Europe for his own personal objects, and that for the same reason he was now

the sole obstacle to peace; till at last she was completely successful.

Alberoni quite unexpectedly received a notice from the King ordering him to leave Spain within forty-eight hours, and in the meantime not to attempt any communication with himself or the Queen. I do not know what his feelings were when this thunderbolt fell on him; but he obeyed, and started on his journey by way of Aragon, carrying with him jewels of immense value, besides money. So little precaution had been taken to examine his papers that it was not for two or three days that the King of Spain was informed that the will of Charles II was missing from the archives. It was evident that Alberoni had carried off this precious document, Philip V's title-deed to the Spanish dominions, perhaps with the view of ingratiating himself with the Emperor; he was pursued and stopped; the will was taken from him by force, together with a good many other important documents which he had abstracted. Such was the terror which he inspired that up to this time no one had ventured to express any joy at his downfall; but as soon as this event occurred, showing that he was really gone without hope of return, there was general rejoicing; and reports concerning him poured in upon the King and Queen, partly relating to public events of which they alone were ignorant; partly to private crimes and vices which may as well be passed over in silence.

The Duke of Orleans was delighted at the news; his personal enemy was overthrown, and with him the wall of separation between himself and the King of Spain, and the only obstacle in the way of peace. He sent the Chevalier de Marcieu, a man of tact and intelligence, to escort Alberoni as quickly as possible to Marseilles, where he embarked for Genoa. It was during this journey that Alberoni told Marcieu the curious anecdote about the Princess des Ursins' catastrophe, arranged beforehand by the two Kings, which I related in its proper place; Marcieu repeated it to the Marquis de Brancas, and I had it from him.

The story of Alberoni is another warning to Kings not to admit ecclesiastics to their councils; above all, Cardinals, whose special privilege it is to commit treason and other crimes with impunity. Cardinals de Retz and de Bouillon are modern instances of this; and Cardinal Dubois, if he had lived, would have furnished another at the expense of

the Duke of Orleans. This is no mere conjecture ; it is a fact that he was deliberately endeavouring to acquire influence over the King. But the Duke of Orleans towards the end of the time had become weary of his bondage to the man whom he had himself raised up, and he would not have allowed himself to be supplanted. He knew that the King disliked Dubois, whereas towards himself he felt a real affection which he showed as openly as he dared ; in spite of his governor and tutor, who were as antagonistic to the Duke of Orleans as they were to Dubois.

Perhaps an explanation of the King's feelings may be interesting. The Abbé Dubois had a disagreeable voice, and there was something false and affected about his manner and appearance, even when he was most anxious to make himself pleasant. On the other hand, nothing could be more charming than the voice and manner of the Duke of Orleans ; he was always perfectly natural, and pleased without an effort. The contrast struck every one, and made a great impression on a King only ten years old. Children are naturally proud and self-conscious ; how much more a spoilt child wearing a crown ! The King, in fact, was very proud, and sensitive concerning his dignity ; though he did not show it, nothing which touched on that point escaped his notice. Dubois never transacted business with him, but he saw him often, and he assumed an air of familiar liberty which offended him, and made Marshal de Villeroy and the Bishop of Fréjus suspect that he was trying to gain influence over him. That was what they both dreaded, and they took care to point out to the King how disrespectful Dubois' way of talking to him was. They were no better disposed towards the Duke of Orleans, and the Marshal often gave vent to his hatred ; but, as the King was afraid of him and did not like him, he made no impression on his mind. If Fréjus had backed up the Marshal against the Duke of Orleans, as he did against Dubois, he would have been dangerous, for his pupil was very fond of him ; but, having sharper eyes than Marshal de Villeroy, because he was not so perpetually thinking about himself, he perceived the King's affection for the Duke of Orleans, with whom he had no wish to quarrel, and was content to remain neutral.

The Duke of Orleans never approached the King, either in public or in private, without assuming the same air of respect as he would have shown to the late King. He never

took liberties with him, and was most careful to avoid familiarity; his conversation with him, and in his presence, was easy and pleasant, adapted to his age and comprehension; sometimes with a slight admixture of playfulness, just sufficient to make the child feel at ease with him, and prevent him from being bored. When he had to lay matters of business before the King he did so lightly and briefly, letting him feel that he was consulted about everything; and always with the air of a Minister advising his Sovereign. If it was a question of some appointment or pension to be given away, he would run through the list of candidates and suggest the person he thought best; but he never failed to add that, though he offered advice, as it was his duty to do, the appointment, or whatever it was, was not in his gift but in that of the King, and it was for him to decide. Sometimes, when the matter was of no great importance, he would press the King to choose for himself; sometimes, but very rarely, it happened that the King seemed to have a childish preference for some particular candidate; he was too proud and too shy to express it openly, but the Duke of Orleans was always on the watch; he would say pleasantly that he thought His Majesty would prefer So-and-so, adding at once, "But are you not the master? I am only here to advise, and to receive your orders!" And in an instant the thing was settled, and the Duke of Orleans passed on to some other business.

This way of treating him charmed the little monarch; he fancied himself already grown up and reigning; and naturally he was pleased with the person responsible for it. It had this further advantage, that if by any chance the King showed a preference for a person of whom the Duke of Orleans did not approve, he had only to tell him that of course it was for him to decide, only, considering the importance of the appointment, he trusted His Majesty would not be displeased if, as in duty bound, he submitted his reasons for preferring another candidate. That was quite enough; the King gave way at once, cheerfully and without the least ill-humour. But such cases were rare; as a rule, the King took no great interest in such matters.

Marshal de Villeroy was always present on these occasions; the Bishop of Fréjus was not, but he was frequently alone with his pupil, much to the displeasure of the Marshal, who would have prevented these *tête-à-têtes* if he could, and of

course he heard from him how much he liked the Duke of Orleans. Fréjus took the hint; one of his objects was to oust Marshal de Villeroy quietly, so he left it to him to say ill-natured things about the Duke of Orleans which were by no means pleasing to the King.

For some time past the Regent had been dissatisfied with the Marshal's conduct. Like the other secret sympathisers with M. and Madame du Maine, Villeroy had been much cast down by their arrest; but by degrees he recovered his spirits, and now resumed all his old airs of a stage-king. The Duke of Orleans treated him with far too much consideration; he laughed at him behind his back, but when they met he shrank before the domineering airs of the Marshal, just as he had done in his early youth at Monsieur's Court. The Marshal had the audacity to boast of his ascendancy over him, in order to influence the Parliament and the market-places; for he was always looking forward to playing the part of a second Duke de Beaufort. All this was a serious annoyance to the Duke of Orleans; for he dreaded lest Villeroy should combine with the Parliament to demand an inquiry into the condition of Law's finances, in which case they would probably be supported by public opinion. I fancy that Law, who knew better than any one how critical his position was, warned him of this danger, and begged him to guard against it without delay; in which he was probably backed up by M. le Duc, Dubois, and other of his confidants. I say I think it was so, though none of these persons ever said a word to me about it; but I cannot believe that the Regent could ever make up his mind to such an important resolution as the dismissal of Marshal de Villeroy without being strongly urged to it by others. At this time Dubois kept me as much apart from him as possible; and indeed I was so angry at the lenient treatment of M. and Madame du Maine, and at the ascendancy of Dubois, that I held aloof from him of my own accord. So I was quite unaware that he meditated getting rid of Marshal de Villeroy.

One day towards the close of the year I was doing business with the Regent as usual, when he suddenly broke off and began complaining about the Marshal. This was nothing new, he often did it; but this time he worked himself up into a fit of real anger; he jumped up from his chair, declaring that he could stand it no longer; that he intended

to dismiss Marshal de Villeroy, and appoint me the King's governor in his place. I was very much astonished, but I did not lose my head; I smiled, and said quietly that surely he was not speaking seriously. "Certainly I am," he said; "so seriously that I insist upon it. I ought to have done it long ago. What have you to say against it?" And he began walking up and down his little room, or rather, whirling about it like a top. When he had quieted down a little he explained his reasons, with many flattering expressions of his wish to see me in the position now occupied by the Marshal.

I let him talk away till he had finished, and then insisted on being heard in my turn without interruption. I told him it was entirely his own fault if the Marshal treated him disrespectfully; his behaviour was only such as might be expected from a man so devoid of sense and so puffed up with vanity, when spoilt by favours such as had been showered on him. I reminded him that Marshal de Villeroy had only—I would not say to ask for anything, for he never condescended to ask—but to express the slightest wish, and it was immediately granted; that he even confided important secrets to him, contrary to his own judgment, and indeed to his own fixed determination. How could he be surprised, I asked, if the Marshal, being the man he was, took advantage of his kindness, and treated him as if he were still a boy in his father's Court? much to the displeasure, not only of his own friends, but of the public. He had only to alter his own conduct, and disabuse people's minds of the notion that he was afraid of the Marshal, and he would soon see a change for the better; Villeroy would be alarmed; and become as submissive and respectful as he had been at the time of the arrests. It would be far better to bring him to his senses in this way than to deprive him of his office, for in the latter case he would pose as a martyr; he would declare that he was dismissed because he opposed Law's excesses and stood between the public and general ruin; he would become a personage of importance, the idol of the Parliament and the people.

The Regent felt the force of my remarks, but he had set his heart on getting rid of the Marshal, and would not give in so easily. He tried to tempt me by again offering me the post, with all the flattering compliments he could think of. I thanked him warmly, telling him that I fully appreci-

ated the value of the appointment, and especially the very kind way in which he offered it, but I was not dazzled by it. I reminded him of the conversations we had had on the subject at the time when the late King was supposed to be making a will. We had then agreed that if, contrary to all probability, the King did not select persons to be responsible for the education and care of his successor, he, as Regent, and as the next heir to the throne by virtue of Philip V's renunciation, must on no account appoint any personal friend of his own to such an office; especially considering the infamous calumnies against him, which were still artfully revived from time to time. I said it was more than ever incumbent on him to observe this salutary maxim since the removal of the Duke of Maine; consequently I was the very last man in France to whom he should think of offering the appointment; and if I accepted it I should consider that I was rendering him a most dangerous disservice.

The Duke of Orleans, who as a rule was never at a loss for a reply, good or bad, was so taken aback by the force of my arguments or by the firmness of my refusal, that he had not a word to say. He paced up and down his little room several times with downcast eyes; at last he said there was a good deal of truth in what I had urged, but Marshal de Villeroy had become unbearable, and I was so admirably qualified for the appointment that he had great difficulty in giving up the project. After a good deal of discussion he said we would talk it over again another time; to which I replied that my mind was quite made up, and most certainly I would not be the King's governor; as for Marshal de Villeroy, I begged him to think twice before he made the mistake of dismissing him. He returned to the subject two or three times on other occasions; at last he admitted that I was right; and he promised to treat Villeroy as I had advised. But he had not the resolution to do so: and the Marshal continued his domineering behaviour to him; this vexed me extremely, but I dared not say anything lest he should recur to his intention of dismissing him. Besides, I was so disgusted with the way in which he submitted to Dubois that I did not care to interfere in anything, and only saw him in private just often enough to prevent people from noticing any change in our relations. So ended the year 1719.

An event occurred early in the year which deserves notice not only because it was singular in itself, but on account of the singularity of the person chiefly concerned. The Abbé d'Entragues was nearly related to the Princess of Conti through her mother; as she always made a point of emphasising the distinction between her and the children of Madame de Montespan, whose mother was not acknowledged, she was very attentive to her relations, and took up this Abbé d'Entragues accordingly. She had him a good deal at her house, and in this way he got into good society, for which he was very well qualified, for he had excellent manners and was very amusing. He was, however, rather spiteful, and took a delight in stirring up quarrels; this propensity had caused his expulsion from several houses of distinction. He had several priories and abbeys, but had never taken Holy Orders. He was a tall, handsome man, with a complexion of singular pallor, which he kept up by submitting to frequent bleeding; he always slept with his arms tied up above his head, to keep his hands white; and though he wore an Abbé's gown he contrived to dress so singularly that everybody looked at him with astonishment.

He was banished several times for his debauchery; on one of these occasions he was sent to Caen. Pelletier de Sousi, happening to go there, thought it would only be polite to call on him, as he knew him, though not very intimately. He went accordingly, about the middle of the day, and was shown into a room where there was a person sitting up in bed, doing needlework, dressed in a woman's nightgown and nightcap, adorned with quantities of lace and ribbons. At this sight Pelletier recoiled, thinking he had got into the room of a woman of bad character; but the person in bed called out, laughing, that he was the Abbé d'Entragues, and asked him to come in. He always slept in this attire, with a woman's headdress. With all this he was a clever, well-read person, and his conversation was delightful.

Well, about the beginning of this year it became known that he had received the Communion according to Protestant rites at the house of the Dutch Ambassador; indeed, he made no secret of it, giving out that at last he had had the happiness of receiving the Communion with his brethren. This occasioned considerable surprise, for all his family were Catholics, and no one had ever suspected him of thinking about religion at all. This freak of his caused so much talk,

and the clergy made such a fuss about it, that the Duke of Orleans was obliged to take serious notice of it, instead of merely laughing at it, as he would have preferred. Accordingly, after a few days' interval, he gave orders that the Abbé should be sent to the Bastille. In the meantime, however, the Abbé had made his escape, and had got as far as Anchin ; whence it would have been quite easy for him to cross the frontier and take refuge at Tournay. Unfortunately, he took it into his head to go to Lille, and call on the commandant ; notice had already been sent to arrest him at the frontier, and he found himself locked up in the citadel, where the Duke of Orleans ordered him to be kept a prisoner.

Before very long he got tired of it, and formally abjured his Protestantism ; he was then allowed to return to Paris, retaining his benefices. For some time he ostentatiously attended Mass, carrying a very large breviary ; after which he returned by degrees to his ordinary habits. In spite of his depraved morals and a propensity for gambling which reduced him several times to poverty, he was always extremely liberal to the poor ; and in spite of his strange diet, for he ate hardly anything but fruit and ice in enormous quantities, he lived to be over eighty, without suffering from any bodily infirmity. He bore with much courage and patience the long illness of which he died ; and made a very pious ending to a life which had very little piety about it.

The condition of the finances led to continual squabbles between Law and Argenson, each throwing on the other the blame for the disorder which was daily growing worse. Law was convinced of the soundness of his system ; and promised, in perfectly good faith, to do wonders if only he were given a free hand. Argenson foresaw a storm ; he was acute enough to perceive that if he clung to his office in the financial department he would risk losing the Seals ; so he gave way to Law, who was immediately appointed Controller-General of finance. There was a good deal of grumbling at an appointment of such consequence being given to a foreigner, especially as it committed the country to a system which many people were beginning to distrust ; but the French are soon reconciled to anything ; moreover, d'Argenson's temper had become soured, and people were not sorry to get rid of him.

Law's new appointment did not save him from having a pistol held to his throat, so to speak, by the Prince of Conti,

who was more grasping in money matters than any of his family, and that is saying a good deal. He had already extracted mountains of gold from Law, thanks to the Regent's easy-going compliance; yet he wanted more. The Duke of Orleans grew tired of his importunity, the more so because he had good reason to be dissatisfied with his conduct. The Parliament was beginning to be troublesome again; the Prince of Conti was intriguing with it in hopes of playing a part unbecoming his birth, and shameful in a man loaded with favours as he had been. Rebuffed by the Regent, he had recourse to Law himself; but, though he lavished entreaties and flattery upon him, for he did not mind what meanness he committed if he could get money by it, he had no better success in that quarter.

Then he had recourse to threats; and finally carried off from the bank three wagon-loads of specie in exchange for paper. Law dared not refuse to cash his paper; but he went at once to the Duke of Orleans and complained. The Regent was very angry; he sent for the Prince of Conti and talked to him in such a way that he was reduced to humble entreaties for pardon. But, rendered furious by this very severe reprimand, and still more so at being disappointed of his plunder, he had recourse to a feminine weapon, and went about telling all sorts of stories against Law. This did not frighten Law, and did him no harm, but it brought a good deal of discredit on himself; for everybody knew his motives, and also how he had enriched himself with Law's assistance. Public opinion was strongly against the Prince of Conti, and it was the more crushing for him because not only had Law's popularity begun to decline, but a trifling matter had just aroused general indignation against him.

Marshal de Villeroy, incapable of instilling anything useful into the King's mind, insisted on his dancing a ballet, in imitation of the late King, of whom he was a slavish admirer, and whose graceful and gallant bearing in his younger days he remembered with pleasure. But it was too soon to suggest such a thing; the King was timid and shy, and it would have been wiser to let him mix a little in society before committing him to dancing on a stage in the presence of an audience. The late King, brought up in a brilliant Court, and accustomed to the society of ladies, delighted to take the lead in amusements of this kind,

among a band of young people of both sexes, all bearing distinguished names; for if some good dancers of inferior rank were admitted to make the ballet go off better, they were so few that the exception only confirmed the rule. Reflection was not Marshal de Villeroy's strong point; he never stopped to consider whether there might not be objections to his plan, or what the King's own feelings on the subject would be; he gave out publicly that the King would dance in a ballet. Then young people had to be sought for to take part in it, good dancers if possible; but these were not easily found in sufficient numbers; some had to be admitted who did not dance well, and others who did, but whose quality was not such as to entitle them to dance with the King; so in the end they were a very mixed lot. Law thought he might venture to ask for the admission of his boy, a very good dancer, and addressed himself to the Duke of Orleans, who, with his usual good-nature, readily consented and undertook to speak to Marshal de Villeroy about it. The Marshal, who detested Law, reddened with anger and made objections, which were indeed obvious; but the Regent reminded him that other young persons had been admitted, who, though perhaps of better birth than Law's son, were still not qualified for such an honour. In the end the Marshal gave way. It is impossible to describe the indignation aroused by this trifle; nothing else was talked about for several days; and when Law's boy fell ill of the small-pox, and was thus prevented from taking part in the ballet, there was general rejoicing. The ballet was performed several times, but it was not so successful as Marshal de Villeroy had anticipated. The King was so wearied and bored by the lessons and rehearsals which he had to undergo, that he took a lasting dislike to entertainments of that kind; and the Marshal never ventured to propose anything of the sort again.

I still continued from time to time to urge upon the Regent the desirability of forming a small council of advisers; to show him that I had no personal motive, I told him repeatedly that I did not wish to belong to it, and even begged him to appoint the persons most hostile to me, the Duke de Noailles, Canillac, any one, rather than leave the government in the hands of Dubois alone. On one of the last occasions, as we were walking up and down his little gallery, he suddenly stopped, and, turning towards me, said:

"You are always pressing me on this point, you are so anxious for the formation of a Council that you do not mind if I appoint to it the persons you most hate, and you say you do not wish to belong to it yourself. Now, tell me honestly: is it not because you think that when the King comes to man's estate you will perhaps be in a safer position if you have had nothing to do with it?"

I instantly seized him by the arm, and, looking him full in the face, replied: "Since that is the notion which you have taken into your head, Sir, I ask you straight out to give me a place in the Council. I told you I did not want one because I know you; I felt sure you would think I only wished to increase my own influence and to take part in the administration. I should have thought that my saying so would clearly prove that my motives were disinterested, for the formation of such a Council without me would certainly be looked upon by the public as a snub, as a proof that my relations with you are no longer on the old footing. But, since your suspicious nature has led you to the opposite conclusion, I repeat that I wish for a place in the Council; that I ask it urgently; and when I do that I think you can hardly refuse me. Now, you have three other men to select; you must have made up your mind by this time; for God's sake bring the matter to a conclusion; it ought to have been settled long ago." He stood silent for some moments, shamefaced and embarrassed; ashamed of having suspected me so unjustly, and embarrassed because he knew my advice was good, and yet he dared not take it for fear of offending Dubois. I spoke to him on the subject once or twice afterwards, but always in vain; at last I grew tired of it, and let the ship drift as the currents might take her.

Cardinal de la Trémouille died at Rome; a man whom neither his high birth nor his ecclesiastical dignity could save from the contempt into which he had fallen on account of his loose morals and scandalous mode of living. He was almost bankrupt, although, in addition to his high pay as Ambassador, he held the rich see of Cambrai and several lucrative abbeys. His death reminds me of an incident which is worth recording; it shows how closely the Abbé d'Auvergne resembled his uncle Cardinal de Bouillon in everything but ability. I have already mentioned the blind Duke de Noirmonstier, brother to Cardinal de la Trémouille and the celebrated Princess des Ursins. The Bouillon family had

always been on the most intimate terms with him, and the Abbé d'Auvergne, in particular, prided himself on his friendship.

About a year after Cardinal de la Trémouille was appointed Archbishop of Cambrai M. de Noirmonstier sent to say that he wished to call on me about something important, and asked me to name a time when I should be alone; for, though he received a select circle at his own house, he hardly ever went out, and disliked being seen. His house was next door to mine, and we both had doors opening into the gardens belonging to the Jacobins of the Rue St. Dominique. I inquired of the servant who brought the message whether he was alone at that moment; hearing that no one was with him except his wife, a person of great sense and merit, who attended upon him in his blindness and was completely in his confidence, I said I would not give him the trouble of coming to my house if he would kindly order his garden door to be opened to me; and I went there at once. He was the more sensible to my politeness because I did not know him at all.

After thanking me, he said there was a matter which had been giving a good deal of annoyance to Cardinal de la Trémouille and himself, and after much consideration he had determined to speak to me about it, although he did not know me, for he thought I was the only person in a position to help him. He then asked me whether I thought the Regent had any reason to be displeased with his brother, begging me to give him a straightforward answer without any regard for his feelings. I replied that the Duke of Orleans had not mentioned the Cardinal to me for some time, but, so far as I knew, he was perfectly satisfied with him. He then proceeded to tell me that the Abbé d'Auvergne had been trying for some time to persuade the Cardinal to resign the see of Cambrai, giving him to understand that it was the Regent's wish, and that it would be wise to gratify him by placing his resignation in his hands. His brother, he said, could hardly believe that the Abbé d'Auvergne would go so far without authority; he was quite willing to give up his see if the Regent wished it, but he would like some further assurance on this point; and for that reason he had taken the liberty of applying to me.

I was so much surprised at hearing this that Madame de Noirmonstier went to fetch the Cardinal's letters, and read

me the passages relating to the affair ; the Abbé d'Auvergne, it seems, had used scarcely veiled threats, at the same time protesting how grieved he was by what he called the fixed determination of the Regent. I said I could tell them, in strict confidence, that I knew the Regent had given the see of Cambrai to Cardinal de la Trémouille the moment it became vacant because, among other reasons, he wished to be spared the importunity of the Bouillon family on behalf of this very Abbé d'Auvergne, whom he was determined not to appoint. I said the Duke of Orleans had told me this at the time ; I had no reason to suppose that he had changed his mind since ; and it was certainly very unlike him to bring such pressure to bear on a man of the Cardinal's rank and position. M. de Noirmonstier was much relieved to hear this, but asked me, if it was not trespassing too far on my kindness, to speak to the Regent himself about it ; empowering me at the same time to offer the Cardinal's resignation if I found he really wished it.

I said it was a pity I had not heard of the affair a couple of hours earlier, for I had only just left the Regent, and could have mentioned it. He was sorry to hear this, because it was the regular mail-day for Rome, and he would have liked to put the Cardinal out of suspense ; so I said I would return at once to the Palais-Royal. The Duke of Orleans was much surprised to see me back so soon, and still more so when he heard what brought me. He laughed heartily at the Abbé d'Auvergne's tricks, and ordered me to tell M. de Noirmonstier that he was perfectly satisfied with Cardinal de la Trémouille ; and further that, if by any chance the see of Cambrai became vacant, there was not a Bishop or Abbé in France whom he would not appoint to it sooner than the Abbé d'Auvergne. So this worthy ecclesiastic's trickery had no better result than that of his uncle, Cardinal de Bouillon, when he tried to obtain the Cardinalate for this nephew, and also, in direct defiance of his instructions, for the Bishop of Javarin.

Lord Stanhope came to Paris to confer with Dubois and the Regent about negotiations for peace to which Spain, now that Alberoni was removed, agreed readily. The King of Spain even went so far as to write a very friendly letter to the Duke of Orleans, so that good relations between the two countries seemed completely restored.

On the 12th of February Mademoiselle de Valois was

married by proxy to the Prince of Modena ; the King was present at the ceremony and gave her a beautiful pearl and diamond necklace. Immediately after the celebration of Mass the King handed her into one of his own carriages, saying to the coachman, according to the usual custom, "To Modena!" The carriage started as if she was really going there ; but brought her back to the Palais-Royal. She fell ill with measles directly afterwards ; when she was better she put off her journey as long as she could, and when she did start she made such short stages that the Duke of Modena sent to complain of the delay. The Duke of Orleans then sent her such imperative orders that she had to hurry on to Antibes, where she embarked. The Grand-Duchess of Tuscany, in bidding her farewell, said : "Go, my child, and follow my example ; have a child or two, and then behave in such a way as to ensure your return to France. That is the only thing to do!" A queer lesson, and the Princess of Modena profited only too well by it.[1]

[1] Horace Walpole saw her at Reggio in 1741. He says : "I pass most part of the opera in the box of the Duchess of Modena, who is extremely civil to me and extremely agreeable. A daughter of the Regent's who could please him must be so. She is not young, though still handsome, but fat ; she has given up her gallantries cheerfully and in time, and lives easily with a dull husband, two dull sisters of his, and a dull Court." Elsewhere he speaks of her as a "favourite daughter of the Regent, full of wit and joy." As we have seen, the Regent was very glad to get rid of her ; she had given rise to great scandal by her amours with the Duke de Richelieu, who was imprisoned in the Bastille for his share in Cellamare's conspiracy. It was to procure her lover's release that she consented to the marriage ; he followed her to Modena in disguise.

CHAPTER XV

1720

Law's bank and his schemes—Confiscation of money—The King begins to attend meetings of the Council of Regency—Dubois appoints himself Archbishop of Cambrai—The King of Spain and the Pope—The Count d'Horn—He murders a broker, is tried and sentenced to be broken on the wheel—His family plead for commutation of the sentence, but unavailingly Plot in Brittany—Subordinate conspirators executed—The Mississippi scheme again—"Shortneck"—The *Conseil d'État* and its abortive Edict—The Regent determines to deprive Argenson of the Seals, and offers them to me—I refuse all his entreaties—The bank and its credit—Steps to maintain the same—Trudaine's indiscretion and its consequences—His gratitude to me.

THE downfall of Law's "system" was rapidly approaching. His bank in itself was a good institution, if he had confined himself to that, and if it had been properly managed; it increased the amount of money in circulation and greatly facilitated trade. Unfortunately, he allowed its credit to become involved with that of the Mississippi Company, a chimera which, in spite of all the mysterious jargon of the stock-jobbers, was nothing but a thimble-rigging arrangement for taking one man's money and putting it into the pockets of another. As the company possessed neither mines nor Philosopher's Stone it was obvious that its shares, in the long run, must decline in value, and that a few lucky speculators who had sold them in good time would find themselves enriched at the expense of the multitude; and so it eventually turned out. The final crash was hastened by the inconceivable prodigality of the Duke of Orleans, who never could say "No" to any one, not even to those whom he knew to be his enemies, however contemptible they might be. Posterity will look upon the events of those days as a fable; indeed, to us, who saw them with our own eyes, they seem, when we cast our minds back to them, like a dream. So much was given away among a greedy and prodigal

nation that the printing of shares and banknotes was actually delayed because the manufacturers could not supply paper fast enough! It may be imagined what a grievous misuse was made of the credit of the bank; the usefulness of which depended entirely on prudent management and being able to meet all demands at any time.

Law still came to me every Tuesday morning, and I used to ask him about his balance-sheet; but he did not tell me much; he only complained mildly that the Duke of Orleans was throwing everything out of the windows. At last, when it could no longer be concealed, he did partly admit the critical state of affairs, assuring me that he was not without resources if only the Regent would leave him alone. But that did not reassure me, for people were beginning to distrust banknotes, which were soon at a considerable discount. Then the Government tried to keep up their value by prohibiting the use of gold, silver, or jewels; they wanted to make people believe that from the time of Abraham, who paid in silver for Sarah's sepulchre, downwards, all nations had been in error as to the value of the precious metals; that paper was the one thing needful, and that we could not do foreign and hostile nations a greater injury than by allowing them to absorb all our specie and precious stones.

The agents of the Mississippi Company were empowered to search houses and confiscate all the coined money they found; so that people, for fear of being betrayed by some servant, were forced to carry all their valuables to the bank. Many preferred to bury their money, and it happened in some cases that the owner died without revealing the hiding-place, so that his little treasure was lost to his heirs. These measures were enforced with the greatest harshness; considerable sums of money were confiscated, and heavy fines imposed in addition; it is astonishing that the people should have borne this oppression so patiently. These financial disorders absorbed the attention of the Government during the remainder of the Duke of Orleans' life and for several years afterwards.

On Sunday, the 18th of February, the King attended a meeting of the Council of Regency for the first time. He said nothing on taking his seat, nor during the meeting, except that once, when the Duke of Orleans, fearing lest he should be bored, suggested that he should retire, he said he

would rather stay till the end. After this he came rather frequently. Marshal Berwick was appointed to the Council at this time. There was some grumbling because he was a foreigner; but this foreigner, an exile from his own country, had been in France for thirty-two years, during which he had commanded our armies and served with the utmost fidelity. Besides, considering the sort of business now brought before the Council, it did not much matter who was appointed; there had been fifteen members previously, now there were sixteen; that was all the difference. One day, when the King was present, a kitten followed him into the room, jumped up on his knees, and thence on to the table, where it began walking about. The Duke de Noailles, who was afraid of cats, cried out; whereupon the Duke of Orleans tried to remove it. I smiled and said: "Let the kitten alone, Sir; it will make our number up to seventeen!" The Duke of Orleans burst out laughing, as did the King, who spoke to me about this joke next day at his little *lever*, as if he appreciated it.

The death of Cardinal de la Trémouille caused a vacancy in the see of Cambrai, the richest in France. The Abbé Dubois was not in Holy Orders, but an income of 1,500,000 livres was a temptation, and perhaps he thought an Archbishopric would smooth his way to the Cardinalate. Impudent as he was, and great as was the ascendancy he had acquired over his master, he dared not ask for such a thing straight out; he told the Duke of Orleans he had had a queer dream: that he was made Archbishop of Cambrai. The Regent, who saw what he was driving at, turned on his heel and made no reply. Dubois, plucking up his courage, asked why his dream should not come true, for it was in His Royal Highness' power to make his fortune. The Duke of Orleans, though not over scrupulous about the Bishops he appointed, was startled and angry at this; he replied in a tone of great contempt: "What! you, Archbishop of Cambrai!" and went on to remind him of his humble origin and the scandalous life he led. Dubois, having advanced so far, would not draw back; and proceeded to quote, as unfortunately he could without difficulty, instances of other Bishops of no better birth or morals than his own.

The Duke of Orleans, unaccustomed to refuse him anything, tried to get out of his difficulty by objecting: "But

you are a godless rascal; where will you find such another to consecrate you?"[1] "Oh! if it only depends on that," said the Abbé hastily, "the business is done; I know who will consecrate me, and he is not far off either!" "Why, who the devil is it who will dare to consecrate you!" said the Regent. "Do you want to know?" said Dubois, "and does it really depend on that? Then I will tell you, it is your own Almoner; he will be only too glad to do it; he is outside, and I will go and ask him." Thereupon he fell at the Regent's feet, and thanked him; after which he ran out, drew the Bishop of Nantes aside, told him that he was promised Cambrai, and asked him to consecrate him. The Bishop consented; Dubois returned to the Regent and told him so, renewing his thanks as if the whole business was settled. The Duke of Orleans had not the resolution to say "No"; and this is how Dubois became Archbishop of Cambrai.

There were such murmurs at this scandalous nomination that Dubois, in spite of his impudence, was embarrassed; and the Duke of Orleans was so much ashamed of himself that people noticed that he disliked to hear the subject mentioned. Then it became necessary for Dubois to receive Holy Orders. He made no doubt that Cardinal de Noailles, in the unpleasant position to which his opposition to the Constitution had reduced him, would readily grant him the required letters dimissory, in order to conciliate both himself and the Regent. But he found himself mistaken; worldly considerations never had any weight with Cardinal de Noailles; he knew Dubois' character, and nothing would induce him to contribute towards the admission of such a man to a sacred office. His refusal was gentle and sorrowful, but quite determined; and Dubois never forgave it. Dubois then had recourse to Besons, Archbishop of Rouen, who proved more amenable and granted the letters dimissory.

On the plea of being overwhelmed with public business, Dubois obtained a brief enabling him to receive all the orders on the same day; and he gave himself a dispensation from any preliminary retreat or preparation. He went one morning to a parish church in the diocese of Rouen, some twelve or fifteen miles from Paris, and there received the orders of sub-deacon, deacon, and priest at the hands of the

[1] "Mais tu es un sacre, et qui est l'autre sacre qui voudra te sacrer?"

Bishop of Nantes, Almoner to the Duke of Orleans; who was rewarded for it with the Archbishopric of Rouen when Besons died not long afterwards.

On the same day there was a meeting of the Council of Regency; the members were surprised that it should be held in the absence of Dubois; but they were still more astonished to see him arrive; apparently he had not wasted much time in prayer and meditation after the ceremony. The Prince of Conti, who had inherited his father's sniggering laugh and some of his wit, but not his pleasant manner, at once went up to Dubois and commented on his reception of all three orders at once; saying how much surprised we were to see him there after such a ceremony, performed at such a distance from Paris. He then proceeded, with much malignant wit, and in a most pathetic voice, to administer a little sermon to him, which would have disconcerted any other man. Dubois let him finish; and then told him coolly that if he had been better instructed in church history he would have seen nothing unusual in his receiving all the orders at once, for in that respect he was merely following the example of St. Ambrose, the story of whose ordination he proceeded to relate. I did not hear it all, for at the first mention of St. Ambrose I fled to the other end of the room; I really felt quite sick, and I was afraid I should be unable to resist the impulse to tell him to finish the story, and let us hear how St. Ambrose was taken by surprise, and how strenuously he opposed his ordination.

I may as well finish everything relating to this business, so as not to have to recur to it; a curious anecdote connected with it shows how frightened people were of offending Dubois. He received his bulls from Cambrai early in May, and his consecration was fixed for the 9th of June. The ceremony was to be magnificent; the Duke of Orleans was to be present; and all the most distinguished people of Paris and the Court were invited to attend it. I was not asked; I was on bad terms with him just then, for I had spoken my mind very freely to the Duke of Orleans about his pretensions to the Cardinalate and other matters. He was always afraid of my influence over his master, though I had almost desisted from attempting to use it; and he used alternately to cajole me and keep me at a distance; so that sometimes we seemed to be on friendly terms and sometimes not. His nomination to Cambrai, followed by his scandalous ordina-

tion, had aroused general indignation against the Duke of Orleans, which was pretty freely expressed.

The day before his consecration I thought it right to see the Regent and try to dissuade him from attending the ceremony. I told him I had not said a word to him on the subject of Dubois' nomination to Cambrai, because, as he well knew, I never reproached him when the mischief was done; but I thought it my duty to warn him how strong public feeling against him was, and beg him not to put the finishing touch to the scandal by going to the consecration. I told him that no members of the Royal Family ever attended such ceremonies, and that his announced intention of conferring this unprecedented honour on a man like Dubois was looked upon by the public as a deliberate insult to God and His church. I implored him not to go; I said he knew what terms I was on with Dubois, and that I was the only man of any distinction whom he had not invited to the ceremony; nevertheless, if he would only give me his word to stay away, I would go there myself, much as I should hate it, and though I knew well that the world would consider my doing so as a mean attempt to conciliate Dubois.

I spoke at some length and with considerable warmth; he listened patiently, and to my surprise answered that I was quite right, I had opened his eyes, and spoken like a true friend. He embraced me and gave me his word not to go; thanking me at the same time for my promise to do so, for he said he knew how contrary it was to my inclinations. I watched him narrowly, and I am certain he was in earnest, for I knew him too well to be deceived. If any one had told me that he would not keep his word I should not have believed him, and, as we shall see, he really wished to do so; yet here is what happened. In spite of my confidence I thought it would be just as well, before going to the ceremony myself, to make quite sure that he was staying at home; so when I ordered my carriage I sent round at the same time to the Palais-Royal, to find out what was going on there. Accustomed as I was to the weakness of the Duke of Orleans, I confess it was a severe shock to me when my messenger came back and reported that he had just seen him get into his carriage, and drive off in pomp to attend the consecration. I ordered my horses to be taken out, and took refuge in my private room.

Two days later I learnt the explanation through one of

Madame de Parabère's lovers, for, though she was the reigning favourite of the Duke of Orleans, she was not always faithful to him. She had been with him on the previous night, when he told her that, by my advice, he did not intend to go to the ceremony, speaking warmly of the service I had rendered him, in terms so complimentary to me that I will not repeat them. The Parabère said I had given him good advice, but nevertheless he must go. "You must be crazy," said the Duke of Orleans; "I certainly shall not go." "Crazy, if you like," said she, "but I tell you you shall go." "That is capital!" he said. "You admit that M. de Saint-Simon is quite right, and yet you say I must go! And pray, why am I to go?" "Oh, because," she replied. "Because, because," said the Duke of Orleans, "what sort of reason is that? because of what? tell me if you can?" "Well," said the Parabère, "if you insist on knowing, it is because I have had a quarrel with the Abbé Dubois, which is not yet over. Now he is a devil who ferrets out everything; he will hear that I was with you to-night, and if you do not go to his consecration to-morrow he will certainly think that I dissuaded you; he will never forgive me, and never rest till he has caused a quarrel between us. I do not want to quarrel with you, and that is why I tell you to go to his consecration; though, all the same, M. de Saint-Simon is quite right." After a little more argument he gave in, and told her he would go; and that time he kept his word faithfully.

The next night Madame de Parabère told the story to the other lover whom I mentioned; and he found it so funny that he told it to Biron, who repeated it to me. I never said a word about the consecration to the Regent afterwards, nor he to me; but he looked very much ashamed of himself. I do not know whether he told the Abbé Dubois about my advice, or whether the Parabère told him, in order to make a merit of her share in the business. However that may be, Dubois heard all about it, and he never forgave me; I have heard from Belleisle and Leblanc that he said I was always opposing him, and had several times greatly endangered his position, but nothing I had ever done had wounded him to the heart like my attempt to prevent the Duke of Orleans from attending his consecration.

The King of Spain, who had formerly worked so hard to

obtain a Cardinal's Hat for Alberoni, now used all his influence with the Pope to deprive him of it; not content with the success of his own efforts, he took advantage of his newly concluded peace with our King and the Emperor to persuade them to join their instances to his own. But Rome turned a deaf ear to all their requests. The fact is that, high as is the price which the Court of Rome sets on these articles of merchandise (for such they really are), it would be easier to purchase a dozen Hats than to procure the deprivation of a single one. The Popes use the prospect of being raised to the Cardinalate to enable them to dominate all Catholic Courts and to seduce subjects from their obedience to their lawful sovereigns; they are so unwilling to do anything to diminish its value that they condone not merely crimes committed abroad, which they look upon as matters which do not concern them, but personal rudeness to themselves such as Alberoni had deliberately been guilty of. That explains why the Popes have sometimes preferred to drown or poison a Cardinal rather than deprive him of his Hat, as exemplified in the history of the Caraffas, the Colonnas, and many others. History, on the other hand, does not record a single instance of deprivation; for I do not count the action taken by Popes and Antipopes against each other's Cardinals in times of schism. So the King of Spain allowed the world to watch him engaged in a futile struggle with a man sprung from the dregs of the people, whom he had himself elevated with great pains, but whom he was impotent to cast down. Though he had the personal dislike of the Pope to support him, all he could obtain was that Alberoni was forced to lead a wandering life, sometimes in hiding, till the death of the reigning Pope. Then the Cardinals, in the interests of their order, summoned him to the conclave, which he entered in triumph; after which he lived in splendour, either at Rome or in the various legations to which he was appointed.

Madame la Duchesse, sister to the Prince of Conti, died on the 21st of March, at the age of thirty-one; she was pitied but not regretted. I spoke of her marriage at the time, seven years before her death. She had no children, and left all her property, which was considerable, especially in jewels, to her sister, Mademoiselle de la Roche-sur-Yon. M. le Duc, however, refused to give it up till a few years later, shortly before his death, when he made ample

amends to his sister-in-law, who had not dared to go to law with him.

The Count d'Horn had been in Paris for about two months, leading a life of obscure debauchery. He was a young man of twenty-two, descended from the ancient and illustrious house of Horn, which has held one of the petty dynasties in the Low Countries since the beginning of the eleventh century. His mother and brother heard such reports of his conduct at Paris that they sent a gentleman to him with money to pay his debts on condition that he returned to Flanders; in case of a refusal this gentleman was to ask the Regent, who was related to the Horns through his mother, to send him back by force. Unfortunately, he did not arrive till the day after Count d'Horn had committed the crime which I am now about to relate. He gave out in the Rue Quincampoix that he wished to buy Mississippi stock to the amount of 100,000 crowns, and made an appointment with a broker at a public-house. He went there accompanied by two men whom he introduced as his friends; when they got the unfortunate broker alone in a room they all three fell upon him; Count d'Horn stabbed him and robbed him of his portfolio; one of his so-called friends, a ruffian called Mille, seeing that the victim was not quite dead, gave him the finishing stroke. The people in the public-house rushed in on hearing the noise; they were too late to prevent the murder, but they seized Horn and Mille. The other assassin made his escape.

This shocking crime, committed in broad daylight, caused a great sensation; and the Duke of Orleans very properly ordered that there should be no delay in bringing the murderers to justice. Several persons of distinction, related to the Horn family, went to him to implore his mercy; they tried to make out that Count d'Horn was mad, and had an uncle shut up; but the Regent replied that the sooner a madman of that sort was got rid of the better. Then they represented to him what a disgrace it would be for an illustrious family, related to nearly every sovereign in Europe, if one of its members should die on the scaffold; to which the Duke of Orleans replied that the disgrace lay in the crime, not in the punishment; and when they pointed out that he himself was also related to the Horns, all he said was, "Very well, then, gentlemen; I will share the disgrace with you!"

The trial was soon over, and Count d'Horn and his accomplice were sentenced to be broken on the wheel. His relations then tried to obtain a commutation of the penalty; and, though I am not related in any way to the Horn family, some of them came to ask me to use my influence. They explained that the mode of execution of a criminal was very important in the Low Countries and Germany; death by beheading carried with it no stigma on his family, whereas death on the wheel was considered infamous, and would disqualify his near relations and their descendants for three generations for admission to any noble chapter. This, to say nothing of the shame, was very detrimental to a noble family, for it prevented the daughters from becoming canonesses, and the sons from aspiring to any of the sovereign bishoprics. This plea had some weight with me, and I promised to do my best with the Regent. I represented to him that he might satisfy the just demands of the public, and at the same time spare the honour of an illustrious house, by commuting Count d'Horn's penalty at the last moment to death by the axe; if he allowed it to be carried out he would drive the numerous connections of the family to despair, for the matter would be raked up again every time a vacancy arose in a noble chapter; and indeed Count d'Horn's sister was just on the point of being received into one.

The Duke of Orleans said he thought I was right, and the penalty should be commuted. I then took leave of him, warning him at the same time not to let Dubois and Law argue him out of his decision; for, the safety of stock-jobbers being essential to the maintenance of credit, they were bent on severity. Then I went to La Ferté, to spend Holy Week there in retirement. It turned out just as I had anticipated: the first piece of news that reached me from Paris was that Count d'Horn and his accomplice had expired on the wheel on the 26th of March, having been previously subjected to torture. All the distinguished nobility of the Low Countries and Germany resented the execution as an outrage, and some curious plots for vengeance on the Duke of Orleans were concocted. Long after his death some members of the Horn family spoke of him to me in terms of the bitterest resentment.[1]

[1] In a letter to the Princess of Wales Madame says: "My son told me something to-day which brought tears to my eyes. He said: 'There

On the same day, March 26th, four gentlemen of Brittany were beheaded at Nantes for sedition and high treason ; and sixteen others who had escaped arrest were executed in effigy. They admitted their share in a conspiracy to admit a Spanish army into Brittany, and thence to march into France, their object being to overthrow the Duke of Orleans and make the Duke of Maine Regent under the King of Spain. The details of the plot were hushed up as much as possible, so as not to implicate M. and Madame du Maine ; for by this time they had been set at liberty. This is the usual outcome of plots against the State ; a number of subordinate conspirators suffer death or exile, and their families are reduced to poverty, while the chiefs who led them on lose not a hair of their heads.

One day, towards the end of April, as I was working with the Duke of Orleans, he told me that the First-President had been to him to ask his consent to a marriage between his daughter, Mademoiselle de Mesmes, and the Duke de Lorge. I had not heard a word about it previously, and I must confess I flew into a violent passion. We have seen how much I had done for this brother-in-law of mine ; it was cruel to see him engaged to the daughter of a man whom I abhorred, as I took very good care to show him every time we met at the Palais-Royal. I returned at once to Meudon, where we had already taken up our quarters, and told Madame de Saint-Simon ; she was as much shocked and grieved at her brother's act as I was. I told her I would never see his wife, nor would I ever speak to the Maréchale de Lorge, or M. and Madame Lausun, again, if they signed the marriage contract or were present at the wedding. I expressed my displeasure as openly as possible ; and this put a stop to the marriage for a time. The Duke de Lorge flattered himself that his sisters would be able to bring me round in time, but he did not venture to come near me.

The game of thimblerig in Mississippi stock having almost come to an end, it was now proposed to make a real settlement, and set up factories after the English fashion, in the vast regions possessed by the company. With this object numbers of beggars and vagabonds of both sexes were sent

was a thing said among the mob at Count d'Horn's execution which touched my heart, and I feel deeply grateful. They said : "When anyone commits an offence against the Regent personally he forgives everything : but when the offence is against one of us, he stands no nonsense, and sees that justice is done." ' "

off from Paris and from all parts of the country ; among them many women of the town. If the business had been carried out with foresight and discretion, Paris and the provinces would have been relieved of a superfluous and dangerous class of population ; but it was done with so much harshness and unfairness that it caused a general outcry. No care was taken to provide for the maintenance of these poor wretches on the roads, or even at the ports of embarkation ; they were shut up at night in barns, or in the ditches of the fortifications, without food ; their treatment aroused general pity and indignation, but the alms collected on their behalf were not nearly sufficient ; and a shocking number of them died. Besides this barbarity, there were complaints that many people not belonging to the specified classes were carried off in this way, the officials being bribed to arrest them by persons interested in getting rid of them. Such a storm arose that the project had to be abandoned ; the captives not already shipped off were released, to shift for themselves ; and no more arrests were made. Law, who was regarded as the originator of the scheme, incurred much odium ; and the Duke of Orleans had reason to regret that he had sanctioned it.

The Count de Charolais returned at last from his long travels ; M. le Duc, content with the provision he had obtained for him, had sent for him, and he went to Chantilly to welcome him back. Turménies was there, with other friends of the family. He was a cheerful, witty fellow, fond of pleasure, moving in the best society of the Court and town, very obliging in the discharge of his functions as Keeper of the Royal treasure ; liked by the Regent, and on such terms of familiarity with M. le Duc and the Prince of Conti that he could say things to them which they would not have suffered from any one else. The neighbourhood of l'Isle-Adam, where he lived, and his love of hunting and good dinners, had made him very intimate with their fathers, and he kept up the intimacy with the sons. He was a man who never could resist saying a good thing ; still, he was never insolent, and never took real liberties with any one. He went by the name of Shortneck, from his personal appearance, for he was a fat little man, with his head sunk between his shoulders.

Well ; M. le Duc, hearing that his brother was approaching, went down to meet him in the courtyard, followed by

his guests. After the first greetings between the two brothers, M. le Duc presented the company to M. de Charolais, who contented himself with casting an indifferent glance over them, and said not a single word. A long pause ensued, during which the circle stood in silence; at last Turménies could stand it no longer; "Gentlemen," he said coolly, addressing the company, "I advise you all to send your sons on their travels, and to spend a good deal of money on it!" and off he went. M. le Duc and M. de Charolais only laughed.

At the time when the Mississippi mania was just beginning M. le Duc was talking rather complacently of the number of shares ("actions") which he had acquired. Shortneck interrupted him impatiently. "For shame, sir!" he said. "Your great-grandfather could boast of only five or six actions; but they were worth a good deal more than all yours!" The rest of the company present cast down their eyes; but M. le Duc only laughed, and was not in the least annoyed with him. He often said sharp things to the late King's Ministers; and after the beginning of the Regency to the Duke of Orleans himself, who was much amused by them.

The King began riding about this time; at a walk to begin with, but he was soon allowed to gallop. He also began to learn to shoot.

The Spaniards evacuated Sicily, of which the Emperor took possession, the King of Sicily receiving Sardinia in exchange, and assuming the title of King of Sardinia.

On the 22nd of May a decree of the Conseil d'État was published reducing the face-value of bank-notes and Mississippi shares by degrees, so that at the end of the year they would be reduced by one-half. This caused general consternation; rich people thought they were ruined, the poor that they were reduced to beggary. The Parliament at once refused to register the edict, and remonstrated against it in very outspoken language; posing as the protector of the public, who fancied that they were indebted to that body for the revocation of the edict which followed within a week. In reality, however, it was revoked because the Government saw it had made a mistake, and was alarmed at the universal clamour.

The effect of all this was to destroy completely what little confidence the public still retained in Law's financial opera-

tions. Argenson was suspected of having suggested the edict, in order to spite Law, who was now made a scapegoat. The Regent went through the farce of refusing to see him when he asked for an audience, but allowed him to be admitted to his room by a back-entrance next day. M. le Duc, his mother, and all their clan had too much at stake in Law's operations to abandon him; they flocked over from Chantilly, and their importunities were another plague which the Duke of Orleans had to put up with as well as he could. Dubois had sanctioned the edict in good faith, believing it would be beneficial; but he dared not support Law openly against the general clamour; on the other hand, he could not afford to quarrel with him, lest he should let the public into the secret of the enormous sums which Dubois had extracted from him. So Law remained for some time in a state of suspended animation, so to speak; at last, as we shall soon see, he had to give in and leave the country. The market for shares was removed at this time from the Rue Quincampoix to the Place Vendôme; the change was convenient for those concerned in financial operations, they had more room, and traffic was not interfered with; people who lived in the square were, however, not quite so well pleased. The King gave up to the bank the Mississippi shares which he held, to the nominal value of 100,000,000 livres.

The Duke of Orleans was so angry with Argenson for his underhand conduct about the edict that he made up his mind to deprive him of the Seals. He told me so one morning, and, to my immense astonishment, offered them to me. I burst out laughing; but he said he was quite serious; he saw no one else to whom he could entrust them. I said I could not believe that, among so many judges and lawyers, he could not find one sufficiently trustworthy, but if that was really so he might at any rate give the Seals to a prelate; it was simply ridiculous to choose a man of the sword, absolutely ignorant of law and of legal procedure. He replied that the duties of the office were merely formal, a routine which I could easily master in an hour; and cited the precedents of the first Marshal de Biron and the Constable de Luynes. I insisted on his seeking for some one else; and he had the patience to go through the long list of Judges and eminent lawyers, explaining his reasons for objecting to each of them. Then he went through the members of

the Council of Regency and the prelates in the same way, but more briefly; for there really was no one among them suitable for the appointment. I contested his objections to certain magistrates, however; particularly to the Chancellor, advising that the Seals should be restored to him.

At last I told him flatly that I would not make myself a laughing-stock by accepting an appointment for which I was perfectly unqualified; but, in spite of this, he persisted in arguing the point for three hours. I tried several times to get away on the plea that I had to go all the way to Meudon; at last, very reluctantly, he let me go; but only on condition that I promised to receive two men, whom he did not name, whom he would send to me next day, and to listen patiently to what they had to say.

Accordingly, next day, when I was half through dinner with a number of guests, in came the Duke de la Force and Canillac. I was very much surprised to see the latter, for I hardly knew him, and, as we have seen, he was in close alliance with Dubois, Noailles, Stair, and the Parliament. Their arrival did not tend to prolong the repast; they ate like people in a hurry to get it over; and the moment they had had their coffee they proposed that we should retire to my private room. I could see that the Duke of Orleans had repeated our conversation of the previous day to them, and that they had come determined to overcome my objections. M. de la Force opened the case for them at great length; then came Canillac, who was fond of talking, and talked well; he let his tongue go with considerable freedom. Their great argument was the necessity for getting rid of the present Keeper of the Seals, who, after hampering Law as much as he could from jealousy, had treacherously suggested the edict of the 22nd of May in order to ruin him; without troubling himself in the least about the danger to which he exposed the Duke of Orleans, or the irreparable damage which the edict did to the credit of the bank. They insisted on the necessity of replacing him by a man on whom the Duke of Orleans could rely thoroughly, consequently on the ineligibility of any member of the Parliament, more especially of the Chancellor; and, as flattery costs nothing, they added that he must be a man of courage and intelligence, with a well-deserved reputation for honour and disinterested conduct; especially one who, like myself, was known to have kept himself aloof from all connection with

the bank or the Mississippi business. All this went on for about three hours, after which I proposed that we should go and finish our conversation on the terrace. On the way thither M. de la Force tried to tempt me by suggesting how delightful it would be, after all that had passed about the affair of the cap, to mortify the First-President and the Parliament in my own person, and to regard them with the austere and dignified air which I should assume with the Seals.

When we reached the terrace the beauty of the view took off the attention of my companions, and gave me a brief respite from their importunities. We walked quite to the end, and sat down on the spot known as the Bastion des Capucins ; then they immediately attacked me again. I need not repeat their arguments ; suffice it to say that they used all their ingenuity to persuade me to accept the Seals, talking as if all the future prospects, and even the life, of the Duke of Orleans depended on my decision. But I was not convinced, and would not give in. They kept me so long that it began to get dark, although it was nearly the end of May and the weather perfectly fine ; at last I proposed that we should go in. All the way to the house they were telling me how much I should regret my refusal, and so on. When we arrived there I took good care to lead my two friends to the rooms where the company was assembled, and not to my own ; and so I got rid of them, after they had bored me for nearly seven hours. Their carriage had been waiting a long time ; they remained for a few minutes chatting with my guests, and then took their leave.

I never could make out what put this fancy into the Regent's head, but I feel sure he was quite in earnest about it. Dubois, without whose approval he did nothing at this time, probably hoped that I should make a fool of myself in some way, and retire into private life in a fit of pique ; perhaps it was because of the same expectation that Canillac urged me so strongly to accept the Seals ; for he was jealous of my influence over the Duke of Orleans, and hated me accordingly. My determined refusal decided the Regent to restore the Seals to the Chancellor.

By way of reviving the credit of the bank, it was determined that all government bills [1] which had been met

[1] "Papiers publics acquittés," is Saint-Simon's expression, but all his references to these financial transactions are very confused and hard to

should be destroyed publicly in such a way as to dispel any suspicion of their being put into circulation a second time. With this object they were sent once a week to the Provost of the merchants, at the Hôtel-de-Ville, who took a note of them, and then burnt them in the presence of all who cared to attend. The office of Provost of the Merchants was held at this time by Trudaine, *Conseiller d'État*, a thoroughly upright and honourable man, but very rough and discourteous in his manners; he owed everything to his brother-in-law, the late Chancellor Voysin, and in that circle had imbibed a strong prejudice against the Duke of Orleans. He made no secret of his profound distrust of Law's system of finance. Some harsh remarks of his about mistakes made by the clerks who brought him the bills to be burnt were reported to the Regent; and he put the finishing touch to his indiscretions by an imprudent exclamation of surprise, as though some of the bills he was burning had already passed through his hands. This produced a very bad effect; and the Regent came to the conclusion that, at a time when public credit was so severely shaken, the office of Provost of the Merchants could not be in more dangerous hands.

A day or two afterwards I went over from Meudon to work with him as usual; as soon as I made my appearance he said, "I have been waiting impatiently for your arrival; I have to talk to you about very important business"; and immediately proceeded to relate the occurrence at the Hôtel-de-Ville, as it had been reported to him; winding up by saying that Marshal de Villeroy and the Provost of the merchants were acting in concert, and he was determined to get rid of them both. I ventured to remonstrate, telling him that although Trudaine's bad manners were to be regretted, and he certainly deserved a reprimand for his indiscretion, I saw no reason to suspect a conspiracy between him and Marshal de Villeroy, and I thought it would be unwise to dismiss him. I added that, if I defended Trudaine, it was not out of friendship, for he might remember that some time before I had, with his approval, asked Trudaine to appoint Boulduc, the King's apothecary, a man of distinction in his profession and a friend of mine, to the

understand. It seems that what really happened was this: to diminish the quantity of paper in circulation the Government offered Hôtel-de-Ville stock, secured on the revenue of Paris, to the amount of 25,000,000 livres, which was to be paid for in bank-notes; and it was the notes received in exchange for this stock which were to be burnt publicly.

office of *échevin* for Paris, and he had refused with the grossest discourtesy. The Regent said he remembered it quite well, but still he stuck to his opinion that Trudaine should be dismissed. I told him that the removal of a Provost of the Merchants before the expiration of his term of office would be an unprecedented affront, and would produce a very bad effect on the public mind. Trudaine had a well-deserved reputation for honesty and uprightness; people would at once suspect that there had been some trickery about the burning of the bills, and say that Trudaine was dismissed because he refused to connive at it. As for Marshal de Villeroy, I represented the danger of interfering a second time with the King's education, and warned him of the horrible calumnies against himself which would certainly be renewed and find ready acceptation among a public exasperated by pecuniary losses.

The Duke of Orleans, however, declared that his mind was made up, and that he intended to appoint me governor to the King, and Châteauneuf Provost of the Merchants. I exclaimed at once that nothing should induce me to accept the office of governor, for the very fact of my attachment for him disqualified me for that office; I said he could not have forgotten our conversation before the King's death nor what had passed between us about the same subject on a recent occasion. As for Châteauneuf, I reminded him that he was a native of Savoy, a foreigner, and consequently disqualified by the municipal regulations for any office in the city of Paris; I said it would be a double affront to the public to remove a popular and respected magistrate like Trudaine, and replace him by a foreigner, contrary to all rules and precedents. It was all useless; he would not listen to my remonstrances, and, indeed, showed an angry temper which frightened me. At last I threw myself at his feet, clasping his knees with both arms, and implored him in the most touching terms I could think of to listen to reason. He stood fidgeting about impatiently, trying to release himself; but I declared I would not let him go till he had promised not to interfere with either Marshal de Villeroy or Trudaine. In the end he did promise; and, after transacting our ordinary business, I returned to Meudon.

Next day the Prince de Tingry came there to dine with me, and told me, as a piece of news which he had heard just before leaving Paris, that Trudaine was dismissed and

Châteauneuf appointed in his place! This made me very uneasy about Marshal de Villeroy; I saw that nothing had been done as yet, or it would have been talked about; still I was much alarmed, not for myself, for I was quite determined not to accept his office, but for the consequences to the Duke of Orleans. Fortunately, however, my fears proved groundless. I do not know whether the Duke of Orleans merely gave me his promise in order to get away from me, or whether his other advisers got hold of him afterwards and induced him to break his word. I am inclined to think, however, that the former was the case; and that if he could have put his hand as easily on a new governor for the King as he could on a Provost of the Merchants, Marshal de Villeroy would have been blown sky-high at the same time as Trudaine.

There was a meeting of the Council of Regency a few days later, at which Bignon was in attendance about some business. He was son of the Bignon whom I mentioned in connection with the Duchess of Berry's marriage, a great friend of Mademoiselle Choin's, and he had an uncle who had formerly been Provost of the Merchants. He told me that this uncle wished very much to see me; that he was too unwell to go as far as Meudon, but he would be glad if I would let him know when I could receive him at my house in Paris. I said I would go and call upon him directly the Council was over, which I did. As soon as I saw him he told me that Trudaine had asked him to express his thanks; he would have gone to Meudon to do so in person if he had dared; but, not venturing to take such a liberty, he wished him to assure me of his deep gratitude, and that I might rely on his services for the future in any possible way.

I was very much astonished; for I had no acquaintance whatever with Trudaine, and really did not know what Bignon meant. But he said I need not be so reserved, for they knew everything; and thereupon he proceeded to repeat my conversation with the Duke of Orleans almost word for word, describing my action at the close, when I threw myself at the Regent's feet. I could not deny his accuracy; I could only ask him and Trudaine, if they wished to give me a token of gratitude, to keep the whole business a profound secret. They did so with regard to Marshal Villeroy, but they could not consent to keep silence

about Trudaine; they told everybody how I had done my best to save him. He came to see me later, and cultivated my acquaintance as long as he lived; I must say also, to his honour, that his son has never forgotten this service to his father. I could not extract from Bignon, nor have I ever discovered, how the conversation became known; either the Duke of Orleans himself repeated it, or some servant must have been concealed within hearing. As it had transpired, of course it came to Marshal de Villeroy's ears; and his way of taking it was rather funny. He could not forgive me for having been thought capable of filling his place, nor was his malevolence in the least appeased by my refusal to accept it. On the contrary, he hated me all the more because this was the second time the thing had happened; the first time he had only suspected it, but now he knew it for certain.

The Duke of Orleans had very good reason for wishing to get rid of him. The example of M. de Beaufort had turned his head; ever since the outset of the Regency he had been trying to set himself up as a leader of the Parliament and people. The King's person was in his charge; he was known to have enjoyed the confidence of the late King; the absolute authority which he had long wielded at Lyons, and which had now passed to his son, gave him great influence; and he fancied that, as senior Marshal of France, he could command the attachment of the troops,—all these considerations made him think that he could counterbalance the Regent's authority and become the leading personage in France.

The populace of Paris had conceived an affection for the little King as ardent as their hatred for his predecessor; the Marshal did his best to persuade them that they owed the King's preservation solely to the tender solicitude of his governor. He continued his precautions about the King's food, etc., more ostentatiously than ever; these precautions were as silly as they were impudent; sensible people laughed at them; but they had the desired effect of keeping alive the calumnies against the Duke of Orleans, and imposing on the ignorant. In fact, by these methods he contrived to make himself so popular with the mob that when he had a violent attack of gout a deputation of women from the fish-markets was sent to him; and his reception of these ambassadresses was such as might have been expected; he

loaded them with caresses and presents. It was because of the airs he gave himself after this deputation that the Duke of Orleans again made up his mind to get rid of him. The Marshal, however, had convinced himself that, whatever he did, the Regent would never dare to dismiss him, and that if he tried to do so the King would prevent it by his cries and tears ; for he had done his best to impress on the child that he owed his safety to his care, and that if he were removed, it would be in order to plot against his life. We shall see that his infernal designs were not badly thought out, and very nearly succeeded.

CHAPTER XVI

1720

Edict to bolster up Law's system—The Parliament refuses to register the same—A riot and a Royal Proclamation—The Regent complains of the Chancellor's inefficiency—The Parliament is banished to Pontoise—"Safeguards"—Marseilles and the plague—Letters patent for the acceptance of the Constitution *Unigenitus*—These, refused by Parliament, are sanctioned by the Grand Council—Dangeau—His advancement—His Memoirs—The Duke de Lorge marries Mademoiselle de Mesmes—My anger—I finally consent to be reconciled for Madame de Saint-Simon's sake—Parliament finally consents to register the "Constitution" and returns to Paris—Flight of Law.

As a last resource to bolster up Law's system it was determined to issue an edict constituting the Company of the Indies a trading company, on condition that it redeemed bank-notes, to the amount of 600,000,000 livres within a year, in monthly instalments. The company had already been granted a monopoly of tobacco, and other valuable concessions, but these were not nearly sufficient; the real effect of the proposed edict would be to give it the control of all the commerce of the country. This project was very badly received by the public, already rendered furious by domiciliary visits and by the difficulty of procuring money to meet daily expenses; such a storm arose that it seemed as if the whole of Paris was about to break into open revolt, and it is marvellous that it should have been appeased so soon. The proposed edict was submitted to the Council of Regency on the 16th of July; the Duke of Orleans, backed up by M. le Duc, spoke in its favour; and spoke very well, for he could not speak badly, however bad his cause might be. Nobody opposed it; we submitted in silence, and it was resolved to send the edict to the Parliament for registration next day. That body, however, taking advantage of the popular ferment, had declared beforehand that it would refuse registration.

Next morning the streets leading to the bank were so thronged with people eager to obtain money that ten or twelve persons were crushed to death in the crowd. Three corpses were carried in tumult to the gates of the Palais-Royal, where the mob tried to force an entrance; but a detachment from the King's guard at the Tuileries arrived promptly; other troops were soon on the spot, and at last, by dint of promises and cajolery, the crowd was induced to disperse, carrying away the dead bodies. Towards ten o'clock, when the disturbance was nearly over, Law arrived at the Palais-Royal; he was much hooted in the streets, and the Duke of Orleans did not think it advisable to let him return; he sent back his carriage, however, which was pelted with stones, and all the windows of his house were broken. The news of all this was so long in reaching our quarter that everything was quiet when I arrived at the Palais-Royal. I found the Duke of Orleans almost alone; he was quite composed, and let it be seen that he did not approve of any one showing signs of perturbation. So, as I had nothing to do or say, I did not remain long. The Parliament sent word during the morning that it refused to register the edict; at which the Duke of Orleans was very angry.

Next day a Royal Proclamation was issued forbidding the people to assemble in the streets, and announcing that, to prevent a recurrence of the scenes of the previous day, the bank would be closed till further notice. This did not seem very wise, but it turned out better than might have been expected; the town remained perfectly quiet, and there could be no stronger proof of the good disposition of the people after their patience had been so severely tried. More troops, however, were brought into the neighbourhood of Paris, and the Guards and Musketeers had orders to be ready at a moment's notice. Money was sent to Gonesse to induce the bakers there to bring in supplies of bread as usual, lest they should refuse payment in paper; for by this time hardly a shopkeeper or workman in Paris would accept it.

About five in the afternoon of the day on which the Parliament refused to register the edict I was summoned to the Palais-Royal. The Duke of Orleans complained bitterly of the Chancellor's weakness in dealing with the Parliament, and said all this trouble was caused by my

obstinacy in refusing the Seals. I said that, with all deference, I thought differently. "What!" he exclaimed rather angrily, "do you want me to believe that you would have been as flabby as the Chancellor, and would not have known how to overawe them?" "That is not the point," I said. "Depend upon it, if they are so cantankerous with a popular magistrate, reared in their midst, they would be far worse with a man whose appointment they would resent as an insult, belonging to a class which they affect to despise, and of which nevertheless they are jealous; a man, moreover, whom they hate personally, and by whom they believe themselves to be hated. Do not regret my refusal; the only thing to be regretted is that you could not find a magistrate likely to uphold the King's authority. As you could not find one, and as you thought it necessary to take the Seals from Argenson, who seemed to be the very man for your purposes, you have done wisely in restoring them to the Chancellor. But we must take things as we find them, and think of the future; have you formed any plan for getting out of your difficulties?"

After some more complaints of the Chancellor's behaviour, the Regent said he saw nothing for it but to banish the Parliament to Blois; he hoped the lawyers would soon get tired of being separated from their families and homes, and of the expense they would be put to; especially as their professional earnings would necessarily be diminished. This was true; and, as there seemed to be nothing better to suggest, we agreed that it should be so. The Regent then said that he proposed to assemble a small council next day at the Palais-Royal, which he wished me to attend. I did so accordingly, the other persons present being M. le Duc, the Duke de la Force, the Chancellor, Dubois, Canillac, La Vrillière, Leblanc, and Silly; and we settled the precautions to be taken in order to ensure obedience on the part of the Parliament. Just as we were rising to go, the Chancellor went up to the Duke of Orleans and spoke to him for some time; Dubois joined them, and M. le Duc was also called up; at last I found out that the Chancellor was trying to persuade the Regent to banish the Parliament to Pontoise instead of Blois. Unfortunately, he succeeded; and so the punishment became merely nominal; it only exposed the weakness and hesitation of the Government, and the Parliament laughed at it.

Next day detachments of the Guards and Musketeers were sent to take possession of the palace, and all the officials of the Parliament received notices to go to Pontoise within forty-eight hours. The order was obeyed, but the Parliament, in registering the edict for its banishment, coupled it with a remonstrance, which was published, couched in terms of studied insolence and contempt. The conduct of its members at Pontoise was in harmony with this remonstrance; the judges and lawyers gave out that they were taking a holiday and meant to spend it in the country instead of at Pontoise, where lodgings would be dear and uncomfortable. Those who did go there passed their time in amusement, ostentatiously refraining from professional work; only a few young lawyers were allowed to do a little formal business, just enough to make a show of keeping the courts open; they made fun at this among themselves, but woe to any one who had a lawsuit pending!

Very few persons in a position to obtain allotments of Mississippi stock on favourable terms had been able to resist the temptation to enrich themselves; there were, besides myself, only the Chancellor, Marshals de Villeroy and Villars, and the Dukes de Villeroy and La Rochefoucauld who steadily refused to have anything to do with it. The two Marshals and La Rochfoucauld were eternal grumblers, always in opposition; they took this line hoping to become leading personages, and their disinterested airs and ostentatious dislike for the Regent (though it did not prevent them from grovelling before him in private) gave them a certain influence with the Parliament and the mob. One day Marshal Villars was crossing the Place Vendôme in a handsome carriage, with pages and footmen, and his coachman had great difficulty in making his way through the dense crowd of stock-jobbers. The Marshal put his head out of the window, and in his usual braggart fashion began a harangue against speculation, saying how shameful it was, and so on. Nobody paid much attention to him, but when he proceeded to boast that his own hands were clean a man shouted out. "And what about your 'safeguards'?"[1] This was taken up by the whole crowd, with hoots and jeers;

[1] "Safeguards," as before explained, were documents granted by a General commanding an army in the field, exempting private proprietors from having troops quartered on them. Marshal Villars had notoriously made large sums of money by selling them.

the Marshal sank back into his seat quite out of countenance, and had to cross the remainder of the square at a foot's-pace, amidst derisive shouts. Paris amused itself at his expense for several days, and nobody pitied him in the least. The inconvenience to traffic became so serious that shortly afterwards the market for stocks was removed from the Place Vendôme to the immense gardens of the Hôtel de Soissons—a very appropriate place, for M. and Madame de Carignan, who lived there, had made an enormous fortune by speculating in Mississippi stock. They were so mean that they did not despise the smallest profits, even down to 100 livres, and I do not mean for their servants, but for themselves.

Law, in the interests of commerce, had persuaded the Government to make Marseilles a free port. This attracted a great number of ships, especially from the Levant; unfortunately, for want of proper precautions, they brought the plague with them, and for a long time it made great ravages throughout Provence and Languedoc.

At a Council of Regency on the 4th of August we were surprised by the Chancellor producing letters-patent for the acceptance of the Constitution *Unigenitus*. He read them by order of the Regent, who did not proceed as usual to take the opinion of the Council. Personally I was glad he did not, but the omission showed what decision the Regent expected from the members. This manœuvre was the work of Dubois, who was ready to sacrifice the country, the Regent, and everything else to his designs on the Cardinalate, and wished to gain the support of the Jesuits and the cabal which favoured the Constitution. The Parliament refused to register these letters-patent, whereupon the Regent, at Dubois' instigation, determined to have them registered in the Grand Council, and, in order to carry his point, to attend in person, accompanied by the Princes of the Blood, peers, and Marshals of France, who, as officers of the Crown, are allowed to speak and vote in that tribunal. I went to see him on the previous day, not knowing what had been determined; directly I came into the room he told me all about it, and asked me with a smile not to attend the meeting of the Grand Council. I told him he could not give me a command which I would obey more gladly, because it spared me the unpleasantness of speaking in opposition to his wishes as energetically as I could. He said he sus-

pected as much, and that was why he had made the request. I did not attempt to argue with him ; I was grieved at the decision he had been led into, but it was a relief to be dispensed from attendance at the Grand Council ; I knew Dubois was bent on carrying his point, for the sake of his Cardinal's Hat, and my opposition would have been quite useless.

The Grand Council met on the 23rd of September ; several magistrates of that tribunal made forcible and eloquent speeches against the registration, and it was only carried by the votes of the peers and Marshals whom the Regent brought with him. My absence was the subject of much comment, and I heard that many people went to look through the crowd of carriages to see whether mine was there ; Dubois was very much annoyed by it, and considerably surprised when the Regent told him that I had stayed away at his special request. This registration was generally regarded, even by the members of the Grand Council itself, as possessing no authority in the kingdom ; the resort to that tribunal was looked upon as a confession of weakness, and an act of base servility towards the Court of Rome.

Philip de Courcillon, known as the Marquis de Dangeau, died on the 7th of September, at the age of eighty-four. In a way he was a personage of some distinction, and deserves a brief notice on account of his singular Memoirs. He came of a Huguenot family, of recent nobility, in the district of Chartres, but he became a Catholic at an early age, and set to work to push himself on and make his fortune In person he was tall and well-proportioned, though he became stout with advancing years ; his face was agreeable, but its insipid expression revealed his character. Very high play was the fashion in all circles at the time when he first began to appear in society ; he applied himself to the study of all the games usually played, and acquired such a knowledge of all the combinations of the cards that his judgement was seldom at fault. His skill became a source of great profit ; he won so much that, although he began life with little or nothing, he was soon in a position to frequent good houses ; and by degrees was received in some of the best society of the Court. People liked playing with him, for he was pleasant and polite in his manners, and paid up promptly when he lost ; and, in spite of his enormous winnings, no suspicion ever rested on his fairness. The King and Madame

de Montespan were fond of high play; it was not always easy to find persons willing to play for sufficiently heavy stakes, and in this way Dangeau obtained admission to their card-table.

Madame de Montespan used to say of him that it was impossible to help liking him, and equally impossible to refrain from laughing at him; and it was perfectly true. People liked him because he never had a bad word for any one, because he was amiable and polite; really obliging, and a thoroughly straightforward, honourable man; they could not help laughing at him because he was so dull and insipid, and attached such enormous importance to trifles, especially if they concerned the King or some person in high place or favour; because of the servile flattery which he lavished on such persons; and because, as he rose in the social scale, he became puffed up with vanity, and absurdly anxious to parade his petty distinctions.

When he had made good his footing at the King's card-table he set to work to obtain a more assured position, which he knew he could only do by lavish expenditure of money. He purchased the government of Touraine from M. de Vivonne, at a fancy price; and shortly afterwards one of the two appointments of King's Reader, which were valuable because they carried with them the coveted privilege of the *petites entrées*. Then he set his heart on having rooms in the *château* of Versailles, a favour not easily obtained in the early days of the King's residence there. Though far from clever, he had the knack of rhyming, and the King at this time used to amuse himself by giving his friends *bouts-rimés* to fill up. One day, while the King was playing cards with Madame de Montespan, Dangeau mentioned to one of the bystanders, with an insipid sigh, and loud enough for them to hear, how much he longed for rooms at Versailles. They thought it would be good fun to torment him a little, and gave him a set of the most incongruous rhymes they could think of; the King telling him that, if he could fill them in before their game was over, he should have his rooms. But if they thought they had puzzled him they found themselves mistaken; the Muses favoured Dangeau, he accomplished his task, and received a set of rooms immediately.

He had formerly been a Captain in the cavalry; he obtained the command of the King's regiment, but,

though he was never accused of cowardice, he found that court life suited him better than service in the field. He was employed in missions to various Princes in Germany and Italy, and made himself so useful in the negotiations about Monseigneur's marriage that he was appointed one of his *menins*, though all the others were of distinguished quality. Shortly afterwards, with the King's permission, he purchased the appointment of *Chevalier d'honneur* to the Dauphiness from the Duke de Richelieu for 500,000 livres. This led to his nomination as a Knight of the Order in the numerous promotion of 1689.

In 1682 he had married a very rich heiress, daughter of a financier who was known as Morin the Jew ; her sister had married Marshal d'Estrées. By her he had an only daughter, whom he married to the Duke de Montfort, eldest son of the Duke de Chevreuse, an alliance which puffed him up considerably. He became a widower, and by that time was sufficiently wealthy to marry a Countess von Loewenstein, Maid of Honour to the Dauphiness, who was very highly connected in Germany. I have explained elsewhere who these Loewensteins were ; and it will be remembered what a fuss Madame made, but quite uselessly, when she saw the arms of Loewenstein impaled with those of Courcillon on Madame de Dangeau's carriage. Madame de Dangeau had not a sixpence, but she was a very beautiful and charming person ; I have often had occasion to mention her. It was delightful to watch Dangeau strutting about in his mourning when any of his wife's relations died, and to hear him expatiating on their dignities. So, by dint of constant climbing, he had now become a great nobleman, and it was enough to make one die of laughter to see how he affected the manners of that class. La Bruyère, in his excellent "Characters of Theophrastus," says of him that, though not a *seigneur*, he was a good imitation of one.

I was in disgrace with him for a long time on account of a fit of the giggles which overtook me one day quite involuntarily ; indeed I think he never quite forgave it. I was dining with him, in company with several Ambassadors and foreigners of distinction, and Marshal de Villeroy, a great friend of his, was also present. Dangeau brought the conversation round to the subject of provincial governments, and finally, swaying himself about with an air of complacency, said in a pompous tone : "The truth must be told ;

among all of us governors of provinces, Marshal de Villeroy is the only one who has retained any authority!" I caught Madame de Dangeau's eye; she smiled, I did worse; I burst out laughing in spite of all my efforts to restrain myself; for he was a worthy man, and I did not want to offend him, but this piece of fatuity was too much for me.

After Louvois' death the King appointed Dangeau Grand-Master of the order of St. Lazarus. His choice was partly influenced by a desire to amuse himself; for, though he always treated Dangeau kindly, he enjoyed a laugh at his conceited ways. I have already mentioned the dignity with which Dangeau went through the ceremony of making new knights of St. Lazarus, in imitation of the King conferring the Order of the Holy Ghost; and with what a condescending, self-satisfied air he strutted about on such occasions, like a peacock with its tail spread, amid the crowd of courtiers, men and ladies, who went to look on, and who indulged freely in most indecorous laughter. But it must be admitted that he made a very noble use of his Grandmastership; he gave up all the emoluments, which were considerable, to the foundation and maintenance of an institution where the sons of poor gentlemen were boarded gratuitously, and received an education suitable to their position.

The intimacy between Madame de Dangeau and Madame de Maintenon helped to swell his self-importance, and his absurdities increased as time went on. He adored the King and Madame de Maintenon; he adored the Ministers and the whole system of government; everything the King did, even the most ordinary, and sometimes the most extraordinary, actions of his life, threw Dangeau into a transport of admiration. He was just the same with regard to Madame de Maintenon; he adopted all their tastes, their predilections, their aversions, and made them so thoroughly his own that he still clung to them after their deaths. Hence the partiality for the bastards, particularly for M. du Maine, and the unfairness towards the Duke of Orleans which peep out in his Memoirs, in spite of all his timid caution. For the same reason he was a great admirer of the Parliament; of foreign Princes, real or so-called; and a bitter enemy to the ducal dignity. Madame de Maintenon, in her zeal for the advancement of the bastards, would have gladly abolished the first dignity of the realm, and any encroachment on its

privileges found a warm supporter in her. Besides this, Dangeau had vainly endeavoured to become a Duke himself, and found consolation for his disappointment in belittling the dignity to which he had failed to attain. His head was turned by the grandeur of his wife's family, and by his son's connection by marriage with the Duchesses of Elbœuf and Mantua ; he was always on his knees, figuratively speaking, before the houses of Bouillon and Rohan, which claimed princely dignity. This partiality for foreign princes and hatred for the Dukes is shown continually in his Memoirs, partly by his misstatements, wilful or otherwise ; partly by his reticences.

It is now time to speak more particularly of these Memoirs, which convey incidentally a very correct impression of their author. From the very beginning of his connection with the Court he made a practice of recording the events of each day in the evening, and he kept it up all his life. He never departed from his original plan, which was to keep a mere diary, without comment or explanation of any kind ; so that we find every event recorded under its exact date, but not a word about its causes, still less about the public opinion of the Court, or the intrigues of private individuals. Every little thing that the King did day by day is duly set down ; sometimes the doings of the Princes, the most favoured Ministers, or other important personages are mentioned ; but it is a mere dry record of facts ; beyond that there is nothing but the eternal, nauseating incense burnt by a humble courtier before the King and every one favoured by him, ridiculous and insipid praise of trifling acts which no one but Dangeau would have thought worth noticing. It is hard to understand how a man could have had patience enough to persevere with such a task every day for more than fifty years ; a work so dry and meagre, so cautious and matter-of-fact ; depicting, as it were, merely the outward husk of events in all its repulsive aridity.

But the fact is that Dangeau would have found it difficult to write real Memoirs ; to do that a man must be behind the scenes and understand the various forces at work in a Court. Now, though he hardly ever left the Court, and then only for the briefest intervals ; though he was received into the best society, though he was liked and even respected as an honourable and trustworthy man—it is none the less true that Dangeau was never initiated into the secrets of the Court,

never discovered the hidden springs of the movements which went on in it. His frivolous life was such as he has depicted it in his Memoirs: he saw nothing but what was obvious to everybody; he was satisfied with being invited to all feasts and entertainments, as he takes good care to tell us, but he was never admitted into any confidences. I do not say that he did not sometimes hear from his friends of matters which concerned them personally, and in this way he might pick up a certain amount of information; but it did not amount to much; he had very few friends of importance, and they knew his superficial character too well to waste much time over him.

Dangeau's intelligence was below mediocrity; he was a very futile person, perpetually mistaking the shadow for the substance; he fed on nothing but wind, and seemed perfectly satisfied with that nourishment. He had sense enough to behave discreetly, giving no offence to any one, and showed some capacity in the art of acquiring, maintaining, and enjoying a position of a certain consideration; but he never perceived that, from the King downwards, everybody made fun of his fatuous conceit and vanity; and he was always falling headlong into the traps laid for him. But in spite of all this, his Memoirs will gain in value as time goes on; they are full of information which is not to be found in newspapers; from the exactness of their chronology and their general accuracy they will be most useful to any one who undertakes to write a history of those times. They depict with admirable fidelity the external life of the Court, its daily routine, its occupations and amusements, and the manner in which the King spent his time; it is much to be wished that we had similar records for every reign since Charles V; they would add greatly to the interest of what has been written about those reigns.

A final word or two about this singular author. He never disguised the fact that he kept a diary, for he kept it in such a manner that he had nothing to fear if it was discovered; but he never showed it, and no one ever saw it till after his death. It has not yet been printed: it is in the possession of his grandson the Duke de Luynes, who has allowed a few copies of it to be taken. Dangeau, who liked to be mixed up in everything, obtained a place in the French Academy, of which he was senior member when he died, and also in the Academy of Science. He was immensely proud of be-

longing to these distinguished bodies, and delighted in the company of the illustrious men who composed them ; and yet he himself was perfectly ignorant and unlearned. There are in his Memoirs mistakes about dukedoms and the dignities of the Spanish Court which are really astounding.

In comparatively early life he underwent an operation for fistula, and another for the stone, from both of which he recovered perfectly. Two years before his death he was again cut for the stone ; this time it was not a large one, though on the previous occasion it had been very large indeed ; in less than a month he was quite well again, and never suffered any inconvenience afterwards. His last illness was very short ; it was brought on simply by old age, and perhaps by *ennui* now that there was no Court, and he no longer went into society.

The marriage of my brother-in-law, the Duke de Lorge, with Mademoiselle de Mesmes, was celebrated at Pontoise in the autumn. Neither M. nor Madame de Lausun was present at the ceremony, for Madame de Saint-Simon had told them that if they attended the wedding or signed the marriage-contract neither she nor I would ever speak to them again. The First-President, however, gave a magnificent reception, to which he invited the whole Parliament. I was very angry, and told Madame de Saint-Simon positively that we must never see her brother or his bride. The First-President made all sorts of advances to me, without any response ; and I continued to speak my mind with the utmost freedom about him and his son-in-law.

This state of things went on for a long time, but, as I may as well finish up everything relating to this affair, I will anticipate matters. In the end I had to give in, moved by considerations which overcame my pride. Madame de Saint-Simon took the quarrel so much to heart that she could neither eat nor sleep ; she was always shedding silent tears, and her delicate health was visibly impaired. After a long internal struggle, during which I suffered tortures, I sacrificed my resentment to my love for her, and consented to meet the Duchess de Lorge on condition that no one should be present but Madame de Lausun. The interview only lasted a few minutes, and we none of us sat down. Next day the First-President paid me a ceremonial visit, and overwhelmed me with compliments and expressions of respect ; I received him coldly, but politely, as I had pro-

Peter the Great of Russia.

mised to do. His sister, Madame de Fontenille, the Bailli de Mesmes, and other connections of their family, also called, and I returned their visits.

But to dry Madame de Saint-Simon's tears it was necessary that I should see her brother, and at last I consented to do so; she brought him to me, and I received him as graciously as I could; though, I am bound to confess, that was not very graciously. The First-President gave a splendid dinner, at which Madame de Saint-Simon and I were present, by way of a sort of marriage-feast; and, to please her, I consented to give him one in return. He had not ventured to hope for this, and seemed highly delighted; I did my best to behave with tolerable hospitality. Thus ended the open quarrel between the First-President and myself, which had been kept up ever since the affair of the cap; after this we called on each other from time to time till the time of his death; but, as may be supposed, there was no great cordiality between us, and our conversations were not particularly interesting. But we got on very well with his sister, Madame de Fontenille, and a lasting friendship sprang up between us.

About the same time the Duke de Brissac married Mademoiselle Pécoil, a very rich heiress. Her grandfather was a flourishing shop-keeper at Lyons, and a great miser. He kept his money in his cellar, which was fitted up as a strong-room with an iron door, opening by means of a secret spring; and to reach this one had to pass through several other locked doors. One day he disappeared for so long that his wife and servants became uneasy. They knew he had a secret hiding-place, for they had surprised him occasionally going down to the cellar with a candlestick in his hand; but they had never ventured to follow him. On this occasion they went down; the doors were forced open, and at last they arrived at the iron door. Workmen had to be sent for to break through the masonry on each side; after a good deal of trouble they effected an entrance, and found the old miser lying dead on his money-box. Apparently he had been unable to find the secret spring after locking himself up, and so perished; a shocking death, from every point of view. These Brissacs are not very particular about their alliances, yet they do not seem to be any better off for them. The gold takes flight; only the dirt remains.

The Regent and Dubois soon perceived the futility of the

registration by the Grand Council of their declaration in favour of the Constitution *Unigenitus*, and reopened negotiations with the Parliament. These went on for three months, at the expiration of which the Parliament, growing tired of its banishment to Pontoise, consented to register the declaration on the understanding that it should be allowed to return to Paris. It was registered accordingly on the 4th of December; two days afterwards the Parliament was recalled, and resumed the usual business of the law-courts.

The last important event of the year was the sudden flight of Law; he was completely at the end of his resources, and it had become necessary to sacrifice him to the public. His departure was secret, and only became known because Argenson's eldest son, who was Intendant of Maubeuge, was silly enough to arrest him. The courier he despatched with the announcement was immediately sent back to him with a severe reprimand for not having respected the passport with which the Duke of Orleans had caused Law to be provided. Law was released at once, and, after various wanderings in company with his son, finally settled at Venice. His wife and daughter also left France shortly afterwards, but I never heard what became of them. Law was a Scotchman, perhaps of gentle birth, but it is very doubtful. He was a tall, good-looking man, gallant, and very popular with the ladies of the numerous countries which he had visited.

His wife came of a good English family; she was not really married to him, a circumstance which began to be suspected towards the end; after their departure the fact was ascertained beyond a doubt. She had an ugly red blotch covering one eye and the upper part of her cheek, otherwise she was rather handsome; she was proud, overbearing, and very impertinent in her talk and manners, seldom returning any of the polite attentions offered to her; she paid few visits, but kept to her own house, where she exercised great authority. I do not know whether she had any influence over her husband in public affairs, but he always seemed to treat her with marked attention and respect. At the time of their departure they were between forty-five and fifty years of age.

Law had acquired a good deal of property, but his debts were enormous; his private affairs were in a state of chaos, which has not yet been reduced to order, though a special

commission of the Council was appointed to settle matters with his creditors. I have already said, and I repeat it, that he was not a cheat, nor was he greedy of gain. He was a kind-hearted man, gentle and respectful in his manners; he was never spoilt by his good fortune, and there was nothing in his mode of living which could give offence; his behaviour, his table, carriages, and furniture were perfectly unostentatious. He bore the vexatious impediments which were placed in the way of his operations with singular patience till near the end; then, when he was still trying to face his difficulties with hardly any resources, he became snappish and ill-tempered, and sometimes spoke very unadvisedly. He was profoundly skilled in all calculations; among other things, he had studied the combinations of cards to a degree which to me seems quite incredible, so that wherever he went he won enormously at play, though he never cheated.

As I have said elsewhere, his bank would have been an excellent institution in a republic, or in England, where the national finances are under the control of the people. As for the Mississippi schemes, he was taken in by them himself, and believed in good faith that he could found extensive and profitable establishments in America. He reasoned like an Englishman, and did not see how incompatible with such projects are the fickleness of the French nation, its inexperience, its avidity of becoming rich all of a sudden; not to speak of the drawbacks of a despotic Government, which lays its hands on everything, and which has no stable policy, so that the work of one Minister is invariably destroyed by his successor.

As for Law's theories about forbidding the use of specie or jewels, and having nothing but paper-money, I have never been able to understand them; nor any one else, I should think, during all the centuries which have elapsed since Abraham paid in silver for a sepulchre in which to bury Sarah, himself, and his children. But Law acted throughout on a profound system of finance; so profound, indeed, that he never succeeded in making it intelligible; and yet, though there was a good deal of English mixed up with his French, he could talk well and lucidly. He lived at Venice for some years before his death, in poverty, but honestly. He died a Catholic, and received the sacraments of the Church with much piety.

CHAPTER XVII

1721

La Houssaye appointed Controller-General of Finance—Marshal de Villeroy is impertinent to the Regent—I again refuse the post of Governor to the King—My reasons—The Regent consults me on the treaty with England and Spain—I point out the disadvantages to France and censure Dubois—Angry scene between the Regent and Dubois—Dubois attempts to make mischief between me and the Regent—Torcy exposes his intrigues—Visit of the Sultan's Ambassador—The Duke of Chartres appointed Colonel-General of Infantry—Torcy induces me to join him in persuading Marshal de Villeroy to oppose Dubois—The Marshal refuses and reports his refusal to the Regent.

La Houssaye was appointed Controller-General of Finance on Law's downfall. He found everything connected with his office in indescribable confusion; registers and records were missing, and there was nobody who could supply the deficiency, because all the officials appointed by Law had either resigned or been dismissed; moreover, public credit was completely destroyed, and trade was at a standstill. In these circumstances he thought it advisable that such remedial measures as he had to propose should be backed by the authority of the Council of Regency, although that Council was now a mere shadow of what it had been originally. Accordingly, at a meeting of the Council, held on the 24th of January, the King being present, the Regent announced that M. de la Houssaye would bring forward some important proposals relating to the Mississippi Company and the public finances.

During the discussions which followed a rather angry altercation took place between the Regent and M. le Duc as to who was responsible for allowing Law to leave the country, each trying to throw the blame on the other; the impression which it produced was not very creditable to either of them. It came out that Law had issued bank-notes to the amount of 600,000,000 livres, not only without the Regent's authority, but in direct defiance of his orders, and that, but for the protection of M. le Duc, he would have

been sent to the Bastille. La Houssaye submitted certain proposals, which were agreed to unanimously; but, just before the Council adjourned, Marshal de Villeroy made a most impertinent and sarcastic remark to the Regent, showing his contempt for the manner in which he used the royal authority entrusted to him.

I do not know whether it was this piece of insolence on the part of Marshal de Villeroy which revived the Regent's longing to get rid of him; but very soon afterwards he told me again that he was determined to make me the King's governor in his place. I repeated all the objections which I had made on the other occasions; the Regent had nothing to reply to my arguments, which were indeed unanswerable, but they did not convince him; the Marshal was like a wasp, perpetually teasing him, and he could not help thinking what a relief it would be to him if the young King were in my charge instead. Since the *lit-de-justice* I had been on a very friendly footing with M. le Duc; the Regent was pleased at this, and they both made use of me from time to time in their dealings with each other. Apparently the Duke of Orleans thought M. le Duc's opinion would have more influence with me than his own, for two days later Millain turned up, and told me he was commissioned by M. le Duc to say that he had been informed by the Duke of Orleans of all that had passed between us on the subject, that he quite agreed with him as to the necessity of removing Marshal de Villeroy, and that he earnestly wished me to accept the appointment. I asked him to thank M. le Duc on my behalf for this mark of his esteem and goodwill, and to assure him that, next to the wishes of the Duke of Orleans, nothing would have more influence in making me accept the position of governor to the King than the prospect of having to settle the important question of his education with such a Superintendent as himself; but I begged him to consider the arguments to the contrary which I had urged on the Duke of Orleans, and which I now repeated to Millain. The latter, however, would not leave me till he had argued the point with me for more than two hours, without the slightest effect on my determined resistance.

The two Princes were surprised and annoyed at my obstinacy; they both told me so, and said they would give me no peace till I accepted. The Duke of Orleans tried

everything he could think of to make me change my mind; and Millain besieged my house almost every day. This went on for five weeks; at last I determined to put a stop to the persecution under which I was suffering. I told Millain that I had a reason for refusing which I had not yet mentioned to him, though I had to the Duke of Orleans; and since M. le Duc made such a point of my acceptance, I wished him to know it also; it was that, much as I valued the friendship of the Duke of Orleans and his own good-will, I set a still higher value on my own honour and reputation. He must be aware, I said, of the horrible accusations which had been brought against the Duke of Orleans, and which were continually renewed; if I took Marshal de Villeroy's place, I ran the risk of being subjected to the same accusations; the King was liable, like any other child of his age, to illness and accidents; if anything happened to him while under my charge, it would be said that the Duke of Orleans had displaced Marshal de Villeroy in order to get rid of the King more easily, either through my carelessness or my connivance; and I felt that I could not survive such an accusation. M. le Duc would see, therefore, that it was useless to argue the point any longer, for nothing would induce me to accept the post of governor to the King, even if it became vacant by Marshal de Villeroy's death.

Millain seemed much distressed by my obstinate resistance, but he would not give in; he began talking about my personal reputation, which, he said, was such that no suspicion could ever rest on me; he reminded me that at the time of the deaths in the Royal Family, when the most horrible crimes were imputed to the Duke of Orleans, and he was shunned by everybody except myself, no one had ever ventured to say a word against me. This was true; it was my singular good fortune that, although I continued to associate with the Duke of Orleans in the most public manner, under the King's very eyes, in the saloon and gardens of Marly, his calumniators, who were also my bitterest enemies, never thought of implicating me in his supposed crimes. But, as I pointed out to Millain, the cases were entirely different. No one could possibly suppose that I had any interest in bringing about or conniving at the death of the Dauphin or Dauphiness; on the contrary, it was well known that the Dauphiness had selected Madame de Saint-Simon to succeed Madame du Lude, who was old and infirm, as

her Lady of Honour; and, in spite of all our precautions, enough had leaked out concerning the intimacy between the Dauphin and myself to make it clear that by his death I lost the most brilliant prospects for the future. Now the circumstances were altogether changed; I had nothing to lose personally by the King's death, while I had everything to expect from the Duke of Orleans if he succeeded to the throne. Therefore, although my reputation had remained intact at the time of the Dauphin's death, I had every reason to fear that it would not be so if by some illness or accident the King should die while under my charge.

I wound up a conversation which had taken up the whole morning by asking Millain to tell M. le Duc that my mind was completely made up, and I hoped to hear no more about the subject; adding that I should make the same declaration to the Duke of Orleans himself. Two days later I did make it, and another long discussion ensued; he asked me several times whether I would leave him a prey to Marshal de Villeroy, and I could see how deeply he felt my refusal. I was really grieved at having to disappoint him, for it would certainly have made an enormous difference to him if the King had been placed under my care instead of Marshal de Villeroy's; but my personal honour and reputation were too precious for me to allow them to be exposed to the slightest risk of calumny.

I thought I had now heard the last of this business, so far as I was concerned; and that, for want of a suitable person to take his place, Marshal de Villeroy would remain undisturbed; as indeed it happened. But Millain received orders to attack me again, and he carried them out so well that I lost my temper. I told him it was tyranny to bully a faithful servant into accepting a position which would leave his honour and reputation at the mercy of an illness or an accident; I had already explained to the two Princes my reasons for thinking that the Duke of Orleans, in his own interests, ought to leave Marshal de Villeroy in possession of his functions, and that under any circumstances he ought not to choose me as his successor; now I had said my last word on the subject, and they could do as they pleased. If they chose to remove Marshal de Villeroy, they would not hear a word of remonstrance from me; but, if they nominated me in his place, I would refuse flatly; they might send me to the Bastille, if they liked; but, though I

should be sincerely grieved at the loss of their good-will, I would go there gladly rather than accept a post which might be fatal to my reputation. Having said this, with a good deal of warmth, I rose from my chair, and gave Millain to understand, civilly, that he had better take his departure, for there was nothing more to be said. This ended the business; neither of the Princes ever spoke to me about it again. The Duke of Orleans was rather cross about it, but he was never angry with me for long. M. le Duc, though sorry for my refusal, was open to reason.

As I had foreseen, Marshal de Villeroy remained in undisturbed possession of his office. He soon heard of the risk he had escaped; any one else would have been angry with the Duke of Orleans and M. le Duc, but grateful to me for saving him a third time from dismissal. Such, however, were not his sentiments; he was too angry to hold his tongue altogether, but too cautious to risk his position by an open quarrel with the Regent, or M. le Duc; so he vented his rage on me as the weakest party. Unfortunately for him, he did not know how to attack me, but had to content himself with talking against me in a vague sort of way. This soon came to my ears. As on the previous occasions, I would not admit that the post of governor had been offered to me, treating the rumours on the subject as mere gossip; but, after this exhibition of spite and petty jealousy on the part of the Marshal, I did not think it necessary to set his mind at ease by declaring that I would never accept it, as I had done previously. I treated his talk with silent contempt, and never said a word against him in reply. Fortunately, I seldom met him, for I hardly ever went near the King at his age; the Council was the only place where we did meet, and there the Marshal's seat was so far removed from mine that there was no occasion for us to speak to each other.

Although the Duke of Orleans no longer kept me informed on all public affairs, as he had done before Dubois acquired such complete ascendancy, the old habit of consulting me was still too strong for him at times. As I said before, the little grievances he sometimes had against me never lasted long; and my refusal to accept Marshal de Villeroy's office was forgiven almost immediately. One afternoon he began talking to me about the treaty then being discussed between England and Spain, and told me the details. It seemed to

me very advantageous to English commerce, but detrimental to that of Spain, and ruinous to our own ; for it would transfer to the English all the preferences we had enjoyed since the accession of Philip V, which, except some privileges connected with the slave-trade, had been expressly preserved to us by the Treaty of Utrecht.

From the very outset of the Regency our subservience to the English Government had been extremely distasteful to me ; as time went on the yoke became intolerable ; and when I heard the Duke of Orleans' description of the proposed treaty I could not restrain my indignation. I pointed out how injurious it would be to both France and Spain, and told him that some day he would have to give an account to the King and the nation for having allowed Dubois to sell our interests to the English, who would certainly never give up anything they had once acquired. I begged him to refer the matter to the congress which was about to assemble at Cambrai to settle questions in dispute between Spain and the Emperor in the first instance, but also for the express purpose of adjusting difficulties relating to commerce between England, Spain, and ourselves. If he did so, I said, he would find among the foreign Ministers assembled there some who would help Spain to resist the exorbitant pretensions of the English ; the Dutch, in particular, would certainly do so, for, though allies of England on land, they are extremely jealous on the subject of foreign trade. At any rate, I added, he would not incur the reproach of having made a secret sacrifice of French and Spanish interests to the novel and unjust claims of the English Government.

We had a very long discussion on the subject, and I could see that my arguments made a great impression on the Duke of Orleans ; he agreed with me on many points, and finally admitted that I was right. He protested, however, that he was bound by his engagements to England. Then, I said, he might see for himself whither the personal interests of Dubois had led him ; I had often warned him that this man's great ambition was to be a Cardinal, a suggestion which he had received with indignation, real or feigned, even going so far as to say that he would put Dubois in prison if he ever hinted at such a thing ; nevertheless, it was perfectly true.

Now, I said, I had not the slightest objection to Dubois becoming a Cardinal ; he would not be the first, nor the hundredth, instance of a vulgar wretch attaining to that

dignity ; but I did object to his becoming one solely through the influence of the King of England over the Emperor ; it seemed to me that a Regent of France ought to be able to obtain a Hat for any one he chose, especially for a man who had formerly been his tutor, who was Archbishop of an important diocese, and a powerful Minister of State. But Dubois, to attain his object, had drawn him into all sorts of engagements with England, and into a rupture with Spain which exposed him to serious danger, as Cellamare's conspiracy proved. The war which followed was brought about merely to gratify the jealousy of the English with regard to the growing naval power of Spain ; Marshal Berwick received orders, which he carried out, to destroy all the Spanish ships on the stocks, all dockyards and magazines ; and, as soon as he had done so, Dubois stopped the war. "Since then," I added, "he has brought you completely under the yoke of the English ; he has acted as their Ambassador much more efficiently than his good friend, the impudent Stair, ever did ; and now, for the sake of his Hat, he wants to hand over the commerce of France, Spain, and other countries to the English without any compensation. This Hat will shortly be given to him, not in the least out of consideration for you, but simply at the urgent request of the King of England, acting through the Emperor ; or rather, in fulfilment of the secret understanding between Dubois and the English Ministers."

I never saw the Regent so much impressed by anything as he was by this too accurate summary of Dubois' designs and conduct. He leant his elbows on the table which separated us and let his head fall between his hands till his nose nearly touched the table, as he always did when deeply agitated. Suddenly he rose and began walking up and down ; then, as if talking to himself, he said : "I must dismiss this rascal!" "Better late than never," I replied ; "but you will do nothing of the sort!" We walked up and down together in silence ; I watched his face intently, and I could see that his reason was convinced, but he was having a hard struggle with his own weakness. He repeated two or three times, "I must get rid of him!" and, knowing him as I did, I recognised in his tone and manner the expression of his conviction of the urgent necessity for doing so, and at the same time of his insuperable repugnance to acting upon it. I saw that I could do no more ; I had convinced him that he ought to dismiss Dubois, but no words of mine

could inspire him with the courage to do it ; on the contrary, further talking would only irritate him by making him more conscious of his own weakness. I told him, therefore, that I had nothing to add to what I had already said, and I would leave him to his own reflections. He was so much agitated that he let me go without attempting to keep me—a very unusual thing with him when we had been discussing affairs of importance. I had little hope for any good result from our conversation.

I will finish up all that relates to this curious episode. About three weeks elapsed, during which I could perceive no change in his manner towards me ; when I went to him for my ordinary business he said not a word about foreign affairs or about Dubois, and I took good care not to broach the subject myself. I heard, however, that on the day following our conversation there had been a long and heated discussion between him and Dubois, and that their voices, raised in anger, had been overheard in the antechambers, although there was an empty room intervening ; also that the Duke of Orleans for some days seemed ill-tempered and moody, a very rare thing with him. Dubois also seemed even more furious and difficult to deal with than usual. I concluded from all this that there had been an angry scene between them, during which the Duke of Orleans had given vent to bitter reproaches ; all perfectly useless, for if he meant to get rid of Dubois he should have done so without seeing him. I foresaw that, having consented to an interview, his weakness would overcome all other considerations, and that Dubois would remain master. I was not deceived.

Towards the end of the three weeks, going to transact business with the Duke of Orleans, I found him walking up and down in his large room. He received me with such unusual coldness that, after a few words on indifferent subjects, I asked him straight out what was the matter, for I saw he had something against me. He denied it at first, but I pressed him, and at last out it all came. He blurted out that he was very angry, that I was always trying to make him do what I wanted, and never would do anything to please him ; that I had declined the charge of the finances, and the place of chairman of the Council for Home Affairs ; that I had refused to attend the Grand Council for the affair of the Constitution, to which he went accompanied by all the peers and Marshals of France ; and that I had thrice refused

to deliver him from an intolerable situation by accepting the post of governor to the King. "Is that all?" I asked. "That is all," he said; "and quite enough too, it seems to me!"

"Well then, Sir," I said, "I will begin with the refusals you have mentioned, because there we have to do with matters of fact; I will deal afterwards with your vague reproach that I try to make you do as I please. Of my first two refusals, let me remind you that only one really matters, that of the finances. I know you were vexed at it; you would have been still more vexed if I had accepted; I refused because I know nothing about finance; I should have made blunder after blunder, and in financial matters there is no such thing as an insignificant blunder. How could I have understood all Law's complicated schemes? or grasped the helm which has at last wrenched itself out of your own hands? And if all the Duke de Noailles' suppleness and mean subservience to the Parliament could not prevent that body from interfering with the finances, how do you think I should have got on with it, after my open quarrel with the First-President over the affair of the cap? When, I should like to know, was a man ever blamed for refusing an important and lucrative office because, as he honestly confesses, his capacity is not equal to it? If I were speaking of any one else I should say that such a refusal was unusually disinterested, and deserved praise rather than blame. So much for the finances.

"It is true I did refuse the post of President of the Council for the Interior, because I thought it too laborious; but let me remind you of what followed. You asked me what office I wished to take; I replied that it was for you to say, but I should like a subordinate place in the same Council. You said very kindly that was out of the question, for if I would not preside over a council, I must be a member of that over which you presided yourself. So you see I am right in saying that this refusal goes for nothing, since I was content with a much lower place than the one you offered me. As for the affair of the Grand Council, have you lost your memory, Sir? In that case I will remind you that I arrived from Meudon knowing nothing about the meeting, that I found you in this very room giving the necessary orders; I asked you what it was all about; you explained the matter and told me that you were sending out summonses to the

peers to attend the court, but that, instead of sending me one, you were going to ask me to stay away, because you knew I should raise a devil of an opposition to your proposals. I replied that I considered your request as a favour, because it spared me the unpleasantness of opposing you publicly. You laughed, and we sat down to our usual business. You were not angry then; you never thought of being so till to-day; now, honestly, sir, is that reasonable? As for the Seals, allow me to say that I have never been able to comprehend your whim in that matter; why you should insult the whole body of magistrates by offering the Seals to a man of the sword, and pick out the very man whom they most disliked, and who had an open quarrel with the First-President, is quite beyond me. My refusal, which I do not hesitate to say was wise, led you to restore the Seals to the Chancellor, and you have no reason to be dissatisfied with the result."

Up to this point the Duke of Orleans listened to me without interruption; probably the matters referred to had not really affected him except at the moment when Dubois cast them up against me; but when I began to justify my refusal of the post of governor to the King, he broke out in bitter reproaches, and I was obliged to go over the old ground again, using the old arguments, which I need not repeat here. It is sufficient to say that in the end he admitted that in this case, as in the others, I had been right to refuse, and had not deserved his displeasure. Then I proceeded to deal with his general complaint I wanted to make him do as I pleased, and never did anything to please him.

I reminded him of many instances in which I had consented to do things which I greatly disliked, and wound up by saying: "You forced me, in spite of all my remonstrances, to announce the downfall of her brothers to the Duchess of Orleans after the *lit-de-justice*, and the consequence is that she has never spoken to me since; just as I foresaw, though I could not get you to believe it. In fact, I have never refused to do anything you asked, except in a few cases, in which you admit yourself that I was right. Now, as to the other charge, that I make you do what I please. You well know that I have never asked you to do anything for myself or for my relations; when I have advised you about your selections for certain appointments it has always been with a view to your service and your own reputation; if you could

recall the favours you have granted on my recommendation you would find but few in which personal feeling for the applicants has influenced me, and those few were unimportant. You will find that the matters which I had most at heart are not those in which my advice prevailed; such were the rank of the bastards, the affair of the cap, the encroachments of the Parliament on your authority, the dangerous intrigues of the so-called nobility. All these were matters in which you allowed yourself to be misled by others, and you have often told me that you were sorry you had not followed my counsels. But in all these cases, after telling you what I advised, I never said another word on the subject; and you cannot say that you have ever found me in consequence less attached to yourself, or less zealous for your interests. Is that what you call making you do as I please?"

The Duke of Orleans remained silent for some time, looking grieved and perplexed. At last he turned to me with a smile, and said I was quite right, and we must think no more about it; my refusals had been put to him in a wrong light, and he had been made angry about them; but he admitted frankly that he was wrong, and we must talk of something else. "Yes, Sir," I said, "but let me speak plainly in my turn. You went and told Dubois all that I said lately about his intrigues for his Hat; and it is this honest, disinterested priest who put all this nonsense into your head!" "Why," he replied, with a very shamefaced air, "I must confess that it was Dubois who talked to me about your refusals and made me angry." "Well, Sir," I said, "has my answer satisfied you?" "Completely," he replied; "I have nothing more to say. I knew you were in the right all the time, but he confused me." Then I begged him to reflect what sort of hands he had placed himself in, and to consider, if his oldest and most faithful servant was not safe from them, what chance of escape there was for any one who had not my opportunities for seeing His Royal Highness in private, if Dubois thought proper to ruin him. "You are quite right," said the Duke of Orleans, very much ashamed of himself, or so it appeared to me; "but I will forbid him so peremptorily ever to speak about you that the thing shall never happen again. Come, what business have you for us to-day?" He was in such a state of mind that I really felt quite sorry for him; without another word on the subject, I began to explain my business. But our conversation had

lasted so long that we were obliged to hurry over our work ; we parted the best of friends, and his manner towards me ever afterwards was just as it had always been. I have reason to think that he did forbid Dubois to mention my name to him ; the feelings of that good ecclesiastic towards me may be readily imagined.

This incident throws a pretty good light on the relations between master and servant ; to put the finishing-touch to the picture, I will relate a story which Torcy told me himself. Careful as Dubois was to keep his intrigues at Rome secret, Torcy discovered so much through the opening of letters in the post-office that he thought he ought to inform the Duke of Orleans. He told him, in his precise way, that if Dubois was intriguing for a Hat with the approval of His Royal Highness, he had nothing more to say ; but, not feeling certain of this, he thought it his duty to acquaint him with what he had discovered. The Duke of Orleans laughed. "Cardinal ! that little rascal ! " he said. "You are joking ; he would never dare to think of such a thing ! " And when Torcy insisted that he had clear proof of what he alleged, the Regent became angry, and declared that, if Dubois really had such impudent designs, he would throw him into a dungeon.

Torcy returned to the charge two or three times ; that is, each time that he found something new in the foreign correspondence, with the same result. On the last occasion the Regent made the same angry reply ; but the very next day he called Torcy up to him at the Palais-Royal, and said : "By the way, we must write to Rome to ask for a Hat for M. de Cambrai ; will you kindly see about it ? There is no time to be lost." Torcy stood speechless with astonishment, for the Regent spoke as coolly as if they had often talked together about the best way of helping Dubois at Rome. To use a vulgar expression, that really takes the cake ![1] Torcy could not get over it ; not that he had not often suspected the Regent of taking him in ; but the transition in less than twenty-four hours from throwing an Archbishop into a dungeon and giving orders to procure a Cardinal's Hat for him was so abrupt that it took him quite aback ; the more so because the Regent spoke in such a quiet, matter-of-fact way.

This spring afforded Paris an unusual spectacle in the

[1] "Cela lève la paille."

arrival of a special Ambassador from the Sultan to congratulate the King on his accession. This aroused some jealousy among the other European Powers, for the Sultan never sends Ambassadors to them, except occasionally to Vienna, to conclude some treaty of peace. The Ambassador arrived on the 8th of March, escorted by a detachment of Turkish soldiers; on the 21st he had his audience of the King, which was a magnificent ceremony, attended by many ladies covered with jewels. His route to and from the Tuileries was selected so as to show him the town to the best advantage, and the streets were lined with picked troops. This martial display, and the fine view of Paris from the garden and quay of the Tuileries, made a great impression upon him. How much finer it would be if the Pont-Neuf were stripped of its wretched hovels, and the other bridges and quays of the houses which encumber them!

Although the Regent was longing to get rid of Marshal de Villeroy, he never refused him anything, and about this time he allowed the Marshal to beguile him into a very great blunder, that of reviving the ancient office of Colonel-General of infantry in favour of his son, the Duke of Chartres. I do not know who suggested this notion to the Marshal; it seems too astute to be his own. In this way he hoped to persuade the Regent of his own attachment, and at the same time to render him an object of suspicion to the King and the public. The career of the celebrated Duke d'Épernon shows how important this office is—its holder not only has complete control of the infantry, but also appoints the staff of fortified places, and arranges every detail connected with their garrisons. Of course, it was at once suggested that such power in the hands of the Regent's son, a mere lad, might be extremely dangerous; especially considering that he was already governor of Dauphiné, and that they were closely related to the House of Savoy.

The appointment took the public completely by surprise, and was very unfavourably received. Marshal de Villeroy had not sense enough to conceal his malignant joy at having led the Duke of Orleans into a trap. The whole thing was settled in an instant, and the Regent had not time to mention it to me beforehand; afterwards he waited perhaps till I offered him my congratulations, like everybody else; if so, he was mistaken; I never said a word to him on the subject, nor did I go near the Duke of Chartres. As I have

often said before, I never spoke to him when I thought he had made a mistake, if the mischief was done; unless he broached the subject himself. In this case I showed him by my silence how strongly I disapproved of the appointment.

A few days afterwards Torcy asked me for a private interview, and I went to his house next day. He said he wanted to consult me about the mischievous ascendancy over the Regent exercised by Dubois, now virtually Prime Minister; and in his usual clear, precise way recapitulated the dangers to which the country was exposed in consequence. I need not repeat his arguments; they were such as have been indicated in many passages of these Memoirs, and we were both of one mind on the subject. The difficulty was to find a remedy; we came to the conclusion that the only thing likely to make an impression on the Duke of Orleans would be a joint remonstrance on the part of some men of influence. Torcy laid stress on the weak deference the Regent always showed towards Marshal de Villeroy, of which he had just given a fresh example; and on his constant wish to conciliate M. le Duc; he suggested that we should come to an understanding with the Marshal and M. le Duc, and go to the Regent in a body to remonstrate against Dubois' influence.

Torcy had always been on a footing of complete confidence with M. le Duc, and so had I since the *lit-de-justice*; we had no doubt he would agree to our plan, for he could not bear the ascendancy of Dubois. Marshal de Villeroy also hated him like poison, and did not disguise his sentiments. As we have seen, I had never been intimate with the Marshal, and his anger at my having been thought capable of supplanting him in his office was not likely to make him listen favourably to anything I had to say. I told Torcy what had happened; but he thought it did not matter; he was convinced that the Marshal, with his frivolous nature, would forget all about the business of his dismissal from office if he saw a chance of gratifying his hatred for Dubois. I did not agree with this opinion; I told Torcy that it would spoil the whole affair if I had anything to do with it, and I would rather he undertook it with M. le Duc and the Marshal without me. But he said in that case the Duke of Orleans would regard the remonstrance as coming from his enemies, for, although he trusted him personally, he would think he had been drawn in by the other

two. If I joined in it, however, I should add great weight to the arguments against Dubois, which he himself could supply from opened letters, and which he would state much more fully and forcibly than he had ventured to do hitherto. Torcy was a very sagacious man, prudent to the verge of timidity, and not at all inclined towards strong measures if they could be avoided ; so, though not convinced, I gave way. He thought our best course would be to approach Marshal de Villeroy first, and we agreed to call on him immediately after the next meeting of the Council of Regency. It was understood between us that Torcy was to do all the talking.

We found the Marshal alone in his room. He guessed at once that something unusual was in the wind, and asked us what brought us there together. As soon as the servant had left the room, and before we had sat down, Torcy began to explain the object of our visit ; but he had not got far when the Marshal interrupted him. " Gentlemen," he said, " I am your very humble servant, but I will have nothing to do with cabals ; you can do what you want perfectly well without me ; you will never persuade me to go as one of a band, and I do not know what can have put such a notion into your heads. I know all about the Abbé Dubois ; I talk to the Regent about him quite as plainly as you do, perhaps more plainly ; but I talk to him in private ; anything beyond that is of the nature of a cabal. I do not like cabals, and you will never induce me to join in one ! " And thereupon he became angry, stammered, interrupted Torcy when he tried to put in a word, and finally showed us out of the room with considerable haughtiness. When we got outside we looked at each other in astonishment at the folly and impertinence of the man. Torcy was discouraged, and thought it would be useless to see M. le Duc, or to carry the matter any further. He admitted that I had judged the Marshal more correctly than he had. " But, after all," he said, " there is no harm done ; it is only a blow wasted in the air." I had merely acted as Torcy's acolyte during the interview, and never said a word from first to last.

Three days afterwards, when I went to work with the Duke of Orleans, I found that Marshal de Villeroy, like the mean courtier he was with all his pride and arrogance, had told him all about our visit, to make a merit of his refusal, sacrificing his friend Torcy in hopes of doing me an injury.

I told the Regent it was quite true that, convinced of the great harm which Dubois was doing him, and seeing the futility of private remonstrances, I had talked over the matter with Torcy, who, from his acquaintance with the secrets of the post-office, had even stronger reasons than I had for distrusting Dubois; and we had agreed to try whether we could not make an impression on him in another way. I added that he ought to be much obliged to us, and compare our respectful manner of trying to arouse him to a sense of his own interests with that of Marshal de Villeroy, who went about like a mad dog, declaiming to everybody against both master and valet, and then tried by a dirty, tale-bearing trick to set him against his true servants, in order to profit if possible by their ruin. The Duke of Orleans was appeased in a moment, and spoke of Marshal de Villeroy with the utmost contempt.

Torcy was very much alarmed when I told him that the Regent knew all about the business, and exclaimed against Marshal de Villeroy's perfidy; but he was quite reassured after his first interview with the Duke of Orleans, who received him in a very friendly manner. The worst of it was that Dubois, who lost not a grain of his influence, was soon made aware of what had happened, perhaps by the Regent himself. We shall see that he bore a grudge against Torcy, for whom up to this time he had professed great regard and esteem, and contrived to pay him out. As for myself, I could not possibly be on worse terms with him than I was already.

CHAPTER XVIII

1721

Death of Pope Clement XI—Dubois receives his Cardinal's Hat—Death of Chamillart and Desmarets—The Regent's reconciliation with Spain—Proposed marriage for the King and Mademoiselle de Chartres—The Infanta to be brought up in France—I propose the convent of Val de Grâce—And ask to be made Ambassador to Spain to make formal request for the Infanta's hand and sign the marriage contract—I ask for the Regent's influence to obtain a Grandeeship for my younger son, the Marquis de Ruffec—The Regent grants both requests—Dubois is annoyed—Bellisle approaches me with overtures from Dubois—The King's illness and recovery—Death of the Grand-duchess of Tuscany—The Duke de Bourbon—Question of announcing the marriage arranged for the King with the Infanta—Difficulty of obtaining the little King's consent—He finally gives it in Council—Annoyance of the Cabal—Announcement of the proposed marriage between the Duke of the Asturias and the Regent's daughter—My reflections on the projected marriages.

The Pope, Clement XI, died on the 19th of March, at the age of seventy-one. His death was not unexpected, for he was very corpulent, and, moreover, ruptured, so that he had to wear a sort of silver shield to sustain his paunch. Dubois' emissaries, Tencin, and Laffiteau, had extracted from Cardinal Conti a promise in his own handwriting to make Dubois a Cardinal immediately, if he were elected Pope; and they had time to form a party among the Cardinals with that object. Conti was accordingly chosen as the new Pope on the 8th of May, the thirty-eighth day of the conclave. Dubois was highly delighted at this news, and within three months received his long-coveted Hat.

Chamillart died in April, aged seventy. We have seen his prosperity and his downfall, and I have described his character elsewhere. He bore his misfortunes calmly and bravely till death. He was an amiable, modest, sympathetic man, thoroughly trustworthy, never spoilt or puffed up by prosperity, always accessible and polite to everybody. But it must be confessed that he was not strong enough for the burden imposed upon him; he was by no means clever,

easily prejudiced and obstinate ; and, though he had little discernment, he fancied he saw everything. He was perfectly disinterested ; though strongly attached to the King personally, he cared little for office. After his return to Paris he lived in the best society of the town and Court, entertaining his friends every day at dinner and supper, without extravagance ; he hardly ever went out, except sometimes to see me and other intimate friends. He spent two months of every year at Courcelles, where he entertained all the society of the neighbourhood. Without ostentation he gave up much of his time to religious meditations. When I stayed in Paris, which was not often and only for short visits, I saw him every day, and always dined with him once. I was at La Ferté when he died, and I received the news with much regret.

Less than three weeks afterwards, on the 4th of May, Desmarets followed him. After our reconciliation I saw a good deal of him up to the time of his death. He was a man rather sensible than clever, and yet he was not so sensible as he appeared. There was something heavy and slow about him, though he could talk agreeably ; he was harsh, violent, and cursed with an uncontrollable ill-temper. In one respect he was the very opposite to Chamillart ; the latter was an excellent friend, and an enemy to nobody, whereas if Desmarets was any one's friend it was only from interested motives, and indeed very often he would have consulted his interests better if he had been more friendly. Several passages in these Memoirs illustrate his character.

Although Dubois had closed his master's mouth to me with regard to foreign affairs, especially since the recent occurrences, he could not prevent him from giving me scraps of information from time to time. Going to the Palais-Royal one day early in June, I found the Duke of Orleans by himself, walking up and down his large room. As soon as he saw me, "Here!" he said, taking me by the hand, "I cannot keep you in the dark about a matter which will give you as much pleasure as it gives me ; but you must promise the strictest secrecy." Then he added, laughing : "If M. de Cambrai knew that I had told you about it, he would never forgive me!" He then proceeded to tell me that his reconciliation with the King and Queen of Spain was complete, and that a double marriage was arranged between our King and the Infanta, as soon as she was old

enough, and between the Prince of the Asturias and Mademoiselle de Chartres.

My delight on hearing this news was only surpassed by my astonishment. The Duke of Orleans embraced me; after a few words about the great advantages he would derive from this important arrangement, I asked how he had contrived to bring it about, especially the part relating to his daughter's marriage. He said it was all settled in a twinkling, for when Dubois set his heart on a thing he was a devil of a fellow; the King of Spain was much gratified that the King his nephew should demand the hand of the Infanta, and the other marriage was made a condition *sine quâ non*. After congratulating him warmly, I suggested that his daughter's engagement should be kept a dead secret till the moment of her departure for Spain; and that of the King till the time arrived for his marriage, to avoid the jealousy of foreign Powers which this close union between the two branches of our Royal Family would certainly awaken. There would be plenty of time for any uneasiness occasioned by his daughter's marriage to calm down before the King's marriage was announced, for the Infanta was only three years old; and indeed the other might well be postponed a little, for the Prince of the Asturias was only fourteen, and Mademoiselle de Chartres not quite twelve, having been born in December 1709.

"You are quite right," said the Duke of Orleans; "but it cannot be done. The Spanish Court insists on an immediate declaration, and the Infanta is to be sent to France as soon as the marriage contract is signed." "How absurd!" I replied, "what can be the use of sounding a tocsin which will set all Europe in alarm!" "I quite agree with you," he said, "but the Spaniards are obstinate, and insist on having their own way; the thing is settled; it is highly advantageous to me in every way, and you would not have advised me break off the negotiations on account of this fancy of theirs."

After a little talk I asked him what he thought of doing with this child when she arrived. He said she must be lodged at the Louvre. I objected to this: I pointed out that in that case she must be provided with a large establishment, the expense of which would be continually growing, and she would be brought in contact with people whom it would be desirable to keep away from her as long as possible.

Worst of all, the King would be obliged to pay her some attention, he would see too much of her childish ways and naughtiness, and they would very probably take a dislike to each other ; which would be a great misfortune, especially if the dislike was on the King's side. Moreover, the little Princess, growing up in the midst of a Court, would certainly be spoilt. To avoid these risks I thought it would be far better to lodge her in the apartments of the Queen-Mother at the convent of Val-de-Grâce, a beautiful and healthy place, with fine large gardens, and put the Duchess de Beauvilliers in charge of her, whose husband had been governor to the King of Spain. The King and Princess should not be allowed to see each other more than three or four times a year, and then only for a short time.

The Duke of Orleans listened quietly to what I had to say, and then said he thought that would be the best way, but the person in charge of the Princess must be the Duchess de Ventadour, governess to the Children of France. "But not the Infants of Spain," I said hastily. "No," he replied, "but she was the King's governess, and as the Infanta is to be brought up here I cannot put her in other hands. And I am much mistaken if the Duchess de Ventadour consents to shut herslf up at Val-de-Grâce." "Then it comes to this," I said, "that you are to sacrifice the prospects of the Infanta, and incur great and unnecessary expense, for the sake of Madame de Ventadour, your enemy, who is in close alliance with Marshal de Villeroy, and in conjunction with him has notoriously done you all the harm in her power!" I contested the point a little longer ; then I desisted, for I reflected that the Duchess de Ventadour was certainly Dubois' choice, to please the Rohans ; for at this time he was thinking of nothing but his Hat, and expected assistance at Rome from Cardinal de Rohan.

While this conversation was proceeding I had been giving a thought to my own interests, and saw an opportunity to make the fortune of my second son. I reminded the Regent that, since the business had reached this point, he must send some man of distinction on a special embassy to Spain, to make a formal demand for the Infanta's hand, and sign the marriage contract. I asked him to send me as Ambassador, and to use his influence with the King of Spain to obtain a Grandeeship for the Marquis de Ruffec, my younger son. I said he had heaped honours on persons quite

undeserving of them, even on his personal enemy, the insolent La Feuillade, whom he would once have caused to be beaten by his servants if I had not dissuaded him, with a good deal of trouble. I had hitherto asked nothing for myself, and what I asked now was a simple thing : nobody, I thought, would object to my appointment as Ambassador ; and to make my son a Grandee of Spain, thereby giving him the rank and precedence of a Duke, would be a favour naturally arising from the first.

The Duke of Orleans would hardly let me finish ; he at once promised me the appointment, and said he would do what was necessary to obtain a Grandeeship for my son, speaking in the most affectionate manner. He asked me to keep the matter a close secret for the present, and not to make any preparations likely to attract attention till he gave me leave. I saw that, besides the secrecy of the business itself, he wanted a little time to get round his Dubois, and persuade him to swallow the pill of my appointment. After thanking him, I asked him, as a further favour, not to give me regular pay as Ambassador, but to give me a lump sum sufficient to enable me to defray the expenses of my mission without ruining myself ; I also asked him not to charge me with any other business, for I did not wish to be absent from him for long. The fact is, I was afraid lest Dubois, unable to prevent my appointment, might avail himself of it to get rid of me by keeping me in Spain under the pretext of one affair after another ; and, from what happened afterwards, I could see that this suspicion was justified. The Duke of Orleans granted both requests, saying in a very kind way that he did not want me to be away longer than I could help. I went home highly satisfied, thinking that I had done a great thing for my family. But, good God ! how vain are man's projects and triumphs !

The new Pope appointed Dubois a Cardinal on the 16th of July. He received the news, and the congratulations which followed, with intense delight ; but he controlled his feelings, and attributed his promotion to the good offices of the Regent, who, as we have seen, had in reality little or nothing to do with it. Although we were on such bad terms I thought I ought to gratify the Duke of Orleans by going to congratulate the new Cardinal, especially as I must be brought into close relations with him during my embassy.

He received me with all imaginable politeness and respect, and no allusion was made to the past. The Duke of Orleans was much pleased at this proceeding on my part, and thanked me warmly for it. Whenever I met the new Cardinal after this at the Palais-Royal he came up to me at once, and overwhelmed me with polite assurances, which I did not trust in the least.

When he received his red skull cap from the King's hands, he took off his episcopal cross and presented it to the Bishop of Fréjus, asking him to wear it for his sake, as it would bring him luck. Fréjus turned very red and received it with a good deal of embarrassment. The cross was made in a rather peculiar way, and was easily recognised, so that Fréjus, who often met Dubois in the King's rooms, was obliged to wear it. A few days afterwards he dined with the Duchess du Lude, M. and Madame Torcy being among the other guests. Madame Torcy disliked Dubois, and, being by birth an Arnaud, was naturally very angry with Fréjus for his ardent support of the Constitution and his zeal against what people were pleased to call Jansenism. Having been accustomed formerly to seeing him a sort of tame cat about her house, she began talking to him very freely about his cross, attacking both himself and Dubois with a good deal of pungent wit. Fréjus was so disconcerted that he hardly knew where he was; and he had to suffer for some time, in spite of the other guests' efforts to turn the conversation. He never forgave Madame de Torcy; and her husband also incurred his displeasure, though, as a cautious and sensible man, he had been as much embarrassed as any one by his wife's outburst. It was certainly a very imprudent action on her part.

It was not long before the Regent informed Dubois that he had promised me the mission to Spain. Dubois saw that the matter was settled, and that remonstrance was useless; but he was very angry about it, and determined to pay me off somehow or other. To do this it was necessary to conceal his feelings, to show no displeasure to the Duke of Orleans, and to lull me into security by all sorts of polite attentions. I was not aware that the Regent had said anything to him when I was astonished one day by a visit from Bellisle, who began talking of my approaching embassy as if he knew all about it. I made a very reserved reply; whereupon Bellisle said I might speak freely, for

Dubois had told him everything. He then proceeded to ask me what attitude I intended to adopt towards Dubois, giving me to understand plainly that he offered me the choice between peace or war. He said Dubois had been extremely hurt and embittered by my attempts to set the Duke of Orleans against him; that, nevertheless, he was prepared on certain conditions to resume friendly relations with me, to give me all the assistance I required during my mission, and to help me to attain the private object which had induced me to ask for it. He added some friendly advice, reminding me that Dubois had the sole management of foreign affairs, and consequently his good-will or the reverse would be of infinite importance to me; that his ascendancy over his master would be without any counterpoise during my absence; and that his influence would be greater than ever when he was raised to the purple (for at this time he had not yet received his Cardinal's cap, though the courier bringing it was perhaps already on the road).

I knew that all Bellisle said was true, except that I could not believe in the sincerity of these friendly overtures on the part of a double-dealing man whom I had so bitterly offended. At the same time I saw that to refuse them would give Dubois a great advantage over me in his talks with the Duke of Orleans, who would be vexed and embarrassed by the contrast between my behaviour and his; besides, how could I avoid a frequent interchange of letters with the Foreign Secretary, and how could I carry it on with a man whose offers of reconciliation I had refused? These considerations overcame my pride, and I asked what the conditions were to which he had alluded. Nothing that I could not easily accept, said Bellisle; they were simply that we should let bygones be bygones; that we should never refer to the past in conversation; that I should promise never to speak against him either in public or in private conversation with the Duke of Orleans; and that I should meet him and talk to him henceforth on an amicable footing. If I consented to this, Bellisle said, Dubois would be so delighted at the prospect of no longer having me as an enemy that he would do all in his power to please me.

These conditions seemed reasonable; I did not, indeed, feel much confidence in Dubois' good faith, but by accepting them I tied his hands to a certain extent; I should have to

walk warily, but I should have nothing to reproach myself with, and I should certainly be in a better position than if I forced an open quarrel by rejecting his overtures. I sent Bellisle away satisfied, and two days later he returned with all sorts of kind messages from Dubois. Thereupon the cap arrived, and I went to congratulate the new Cardinal, as I have already related. He came a day or two afterwards to call upon me, in his scarlet robes; our confidence in each other was such as might have been expected, and indeed we had hardly begun to discuss my embassy before he showed plainly his duplicity and ill-will. I will defer these matters, however, till later on; and will proceed to narrate an event which caused much alarm, though, fortunately, it was soon over.

On the last day of July the King, who had hitherto enjoyed perfect health, woke up with a headache and sore throat; a shivering fit followed, and by the afternoon he was so ill that he had to go to bed. I went next day to inquire; I was informed that he had passed a bad night, and there had been another feverish fit. Everybody seemed in consternation. As I had the privilege of the *grandes entrées* I went into the King's room; there were not many people there, the Duke of Orleans was sitting by himself near the fireplace, looking very melancholy. I said a few words to him, and then went up to the King's bed. Boulduc, one of his apothecaries, was just giving him some medicine. The Duchess de la Ferté, who had the *entrées* as the King's godmother, was looking over Boulduc's shoulder; she turned to see who had come in, and, seeing me, said in a loud whisper: "He is poisoned, he is poisoned!" "Pray hold your tongue, Madame," I said; "that is a shocking thing to say." She repeated it, however, and so loud that I was afraid the King would hear; Boulduc and I looked at each other, and I got away as quickly as I could from this outrageous woman, whom I knew very slightly.

During this illness of the King, which only lasted five days, I was deeply thankful that I had so obstinately refused to be his governor; my agitation was such that I used to dream that I held that office, and when I woke with a start and found that it was not so I experienced as keen a joy as I have felt during my whole life. Helvetius had all the credit of the cure; he was the only doctor who kept his head; at a consultation held in the presence of the Duke of

Orleans he insisted on bleeding the patient in the foot, contrary to the opinion of the others; the King was immediately relieved, and was soon convalescent. There was great rejoicing among the public, and numberless Te Deums were sung.

Marshal de Villeroy was not the man to overlook so favourable an opportunity for venting his mean spite against the Duke of Orleans; he made an ostentatious parade of his suspicions and his anxiety. When the King was convalescent he continued the same affectation, with the same object; he was really glad of the King's recovery, but he expressed his feelings with such absurd exaggeration that no one could fail to perceive his motives. For more than six weeks he ran about from church to church, hearing Te Deums; for he had given a hint to all the subordinate officers of the King's household to have them sung, and he made a point of attending them all. The King went in state to Notre-Dame and the church of St. Geneviève to return thanks for his recovery.

These mummeries were prolonged till the feast of St. Louis at the end of August. On the evening of that day there is always a musical performance in the Tuileries gardens; this year Marshal de Villeroy turned this concert into a regular public festivity, and ordered a display of fireworks. That is quite enough to attract a crowd, and the gardens were so packed with people that a pin could not have fallen to the ground; the windows of the Tuileries were adorned with hangings and full of spectators, as were the roofs of all the adjoining buildings. All this influx of people annoyed the King, and he ran off to hide himself whenever he could; but the Marshal, who was in all his glory, went to fetch him, and, taking him by the arm, led him to all the windows in succession to view the enormous crowds. Whenever the people caught sight of him they shouted "Vive le Roi!" The Marshal, still holding him fast by the arm, said, "Look at these multitudes, my master. They are all yours, you are their Sovereign, and they belong to you; do satisfy them by looking at them, for they are all your servants!" A noble lesson for a governor to give! and he was so anxious to instil it into the King's mind that he repeated it at every window they went to. I do not know whether the King ever received other lessons from those in charge of his education, but he has certainly

borne that one in mind ; and Marshal de Villeroy himself was the first to suffer from its effects.

The Duke of Orleans' conduct throughout the King's illness was so simple and proper that he advanced greatly in public estimation. He could not doubt that all eyes were watching him ; but as, improbable though it may seem, it is a fact that he never coveted the Crown, he had only to behave quite naturally. He showed anxiety at first, and pleasure when the King was out of danger ; but without overdoing it in either case. His bearing throughout was commented on most favourably ; and the cabal opposed to him, which was on the watch and prepared to make the most of any mistake on his part, was reduced to complete silence. Fortunately, his intimate friends, even his servants, behaved with equal discretion ; and betrayed no consciousness that they, or the Duke of Orleans, had anything to gain by the King's death.

The Grand-duchess of Tuscany died at the age of seventy-seven, after several strokes of apoplexy. She was the eldest daughter of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, brother to Louis XIII, by his second marriage with the sister of Charles IV, Duke of Lorraine. She had been very handsome, and retained traces of her beauty to the last ; a kind-hearted person, but not clever, and extremely obstinate. In 1661 she married Cosmo de Medici, Grand-duke of Tuscany ; but she did so fully determined to return to France, and nothing could put this determination out of her head. She was always on bad terms with her husband, who treated her with great patience and kindness ; and on still worse with the dowager Grand-duchess, her mother-in-law. She had three children in rather rapid succession ; after the birth of the third she purposely showed more ill-temper than ever, till at last the Grand-duke consented that she should go back to France. He only did so, however, on conditions which placed her under far greater constraint than would have been her lot at Florence, if she would have lived on amicable terms with her husband and mother-in-law ; and the King insisted on her observing them scrupulously. She was to reside in a country convent ; her visits to Paris were to be rare, and she was never to sleep there ; she was forbidden to come near the Court, unless specially invited ; and then only for one night.

She returned to France accordingly in 1669, and took

up her quarters at the convent of Picpus, where she saw very few people. Monsieur took compassion on her, and not long before his death obtained permission for her to live at St. Cloud whenever he was there himself. Madame, and the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, were always very kind to her. Mademoiselle, her half-sister, held her in the utmost contempt, and Madame de Guise, her own sister, never paid much attention to her; she was treated, however, with the honours due to her rank of Granddaughter of France. After the King's death the Grand-duke consented to her living in Paris, and she rented a very simple house in the Place Royale. There she spent the remainder of her days, piously after a fashion of her own; though very miserly, she was much given to good works. Her manner to everybody was always kind and gracious.

Since the *lit-de-justice* I had been on most friendly terms with M. le Duc, who used to talk to me freely about his family affairs; indeed, he even went so far as to discuss the famous episode of the thirteen-months' child [1]; this was at the time when Madame du Maine, in her fury at seeing the House of Condé take an active part in depriving her husband of the quality of Prince of the Blood, was always raking up that incident in its history. After his wife's death early in the preceding year, M. le Duc had retained a quantity of valuable jewels which his sister-in-law, Mademoiselle de la Roche-sur-Yon, thought belonged to her, and which, indeed, he gave up to her long afterwards when he began to think seriously of religion. She made a great fuss about it, and it did him no good in the eyes of the world. I was sorry that he should damage his influence in this way, so one day, when we were talking over his family affairs very familiarly, I suggested that, as it was his duty to marry in order to have children, he had better put an end to this quarrel about the inheritance by marrying Mademoiselle de la Roche-sur-Yon. He laughed, saying he had had quite enough of the Contis; and thereupon proceeded to talk about the misconduct of his late wife, which had been notorious, and which he had borne with patience such as one would hardly have expected from him; and indeed he did not extend it to the frailties of his second wife.

Passing from one subject to another, he began to complain that the Duke of Orleans did not treat him with confidence,

[1] See the pedigree of the House of Condé, in a note to Chapter II, Vol. I.

and never told him anything except when it was impossible to conceal it. I smiled, and said if he would promise not to be angry, I could explain the reason and show him how to establish better relations for the future. He begged me to speak out frankly, like a friend, assuring me that he would not be angry, whatever I said. Then I reminded him that he had a very charming mistress—to that I had nothing to say; it was his confessor's business, not mine—but the Duke of Orleans was convinced that he could not keep a secret from her, and that was the cause of his reticence; if he could manage to imitate the Duke of Orleans himself, who amused himself with his mistresses, but never told them anything of importance, I would answer for it that he would soon notice a great difference. He defended himself against this accusation rather feebly, saying with an air of some vexation that it was merely a pretext; so I told him that, if I had spoken so freely, it was only because I wished to consolidate a union between them which, after all, was more important to him than to the Duke of Orleans. We shall see later on that he repeated this delicate part of our conversation to Madame de Prie, who never forgave me.

When he had got over his momentary ill-humour he said he attributed the Regent's want of confidence to Dubois, and went on to deplore the influence of that unworthy servant over his master. This put it into my head that we might perhaps attain the object of Torcy's scheme, which Marshal de Villeroy's folly had upset, in another way. The King seemed at that time to be fond of M. le Duc; I mentioned this, and said he ought to turn this affection to profit, for the good of the State and the ultimate advantage of the Duke of Orleans himself, by representing to the King the danger of the authority which Cardinal Dubois had usurped. It would be easy, I said, for His Majesty to tell the Regent how much he disliked Dubois, and ask that he might be sent to Cambrai with his red cap and the income derived from his rich benefices, never again to take part in public affairs.

M. le Duc laughed at this suggestion. "I am very glad," he said, "that people should suppose that the King likes and trusts me; and indeed he does show me all the affection of which his nature is capable. But I know him well, and I can assure you that, if he seems fond of me, it is only because he is in the habit of seeing and talking to me every day;

if I died to-morrow he would care no more than he does for the death of the Grand-duchess of Tuscany, whom he hardly ever saw." Then he went on to tell me the impressions which, in spite of his lack of ability, his constant attendance on the King's person had enabled him to form of his character; but what he told me does not fall within the scope of these Memoirs. The result of our conversation was, however, to convince me that it would be useless, and perhaps dangerous, to make the attempt; for although it was easy to see that the King disliked Dubois, he was quite incapable of asserting himself as I had suggested.

The time had now arrived when it became necessary to announce the King's intended marriage. The Duke of Orleans was very uneasy as to how the King would receive the news, for anything startling and unexpected frightened him; moreover, he did not feel at all sure how the announcement would be taken by the public, on account of the Infanta's age, for she was little more than a baby. He resolved to inform the King of the arrangements for his marriage just before a meeting of the Council of Regency, and to make the announcement in the Council immediately afterwards, so that the business might be settled and done with. It happened that at this Council a proposal concerning the issue of paper was down for discussion, which I had strongly opposed in conversation with the Duke of Orleans, and he had asked me to absent myself on the occasion, as he sometimes did. But, letters having been received from the Spanish Court which compelled him to announce the marriage without further delay, he said he should like me to be present, although it was impossible to put off the other business. He was afraid of some hostile demonstration on the part of those members who were known as the "old courtiers," namely, the cabal opposed to him; and for that reason he had determined not to announce the two marriages at the same time.

I would rather not have attended the Council, for I felt it my duty to oppose the resolution about the paper; but in the end I gave way. I reflected that the resolution would certainly be carried in spite of anything I could say, and that, for this once, I might be content with a silent vote against it. So I was present at this important Council, to which I did not look forward with so much dread as the Regent. To my mind, the great difficulty would be with

the King himself; he did not like surprises, and some gesture or ejaculation on the part of Marshal de Villeroy might easily throw him into such a state of mind as to prevent him uttering a single word. But it was necessary that he should say "yes," or at any rate signify his consent unmistakeably; and what was to be done if he maintained an obstinate silence? or still worse, if he said "no"?

This embarrassing question was the subject of several discussions between the Regent, Cardinal Dubois, and myself. It was settled that the Regent should send for M. le Duc and the Bishop of Fréjus separately; for M. le Duc, because there was nothing to fear from him, and it was not right to keep the secret from him any longer; he might indeed resent having been kept in the dark so long; for M. de Fréjus, in order to make sure of his presence when the Regent told the King about his marriage; in hopes that, flattered by the preference given to him over Marshal de Villeroy, he might use his influence to obtain a favourable answer from his royal pupil. M. le Duc was much surprised, but not offended; and he was very useful in persuading the King. Fréjus received the news coldly, as though quite aware that he was only let into the secret because his help was wanted; he said the match was a very proper one, but it was a pity the Infanta was so young; he promised to be present when the announcement was made to the King, but thought he would be neither glad nor sorry, and offer no resistance. Both M. le Duc and Fréjus were requested to keep the matter absolutely secret; but from what happened afterwards I suspect that Fréjus did not keep his promise, but went and told Marshal de Villeroy immediately; for he always affected great deference for the Marshal in matters which did not touch his own interests.

We all met at the Tuileries at the appointed hour; and before going into the King's room the Duke of Orleans drew me into a corner and told me the result of his interview with M. le Duc and Fréjus. He fidgeted about the Council-chamber like a man who is not very brave and has to join in the assault of a breach; at last he made up his mind, and went into the King's apartments, whither I followed him. He inquired who was with the King in his private room; as Fréjus' name was not among those mentioned, he sent for him; then, after a few minutes' hesitation, he went into the private room. M. le Duc was already there, with

Marshal de Villeroy and some others, such as the sub-governors, etc. I remained outside, much disturbed at Fréjus' slowness, which did not seem to be a good omen; at last he arrived in haste, like a man who has kept people waiting. Shortly after he entered the private room I saw the understrappers come out; leaving only the Duke of Orleans, Cardinal Dubois, M. le Duc, Marshal de Villeroy, and Fréjus with the King. I then returned to the Council-chamber; shortly afterwards Marshals de Villars, d'Estrées, and Huxelles came up to me one after the other, asking what this secret conference in the King's room meant. I replied that I knew no more than they did. They remained talking with me for more than a quarter of an hour, I think; at any rate the time seemed very long, and I began to fear that something embarrassing had occurred. At last Marshal Villars said: "Let us go into the antechamber; we shall be as well there as here"; and we all went in.

In a few minutes the door of the private room was half opened; I do not know why, for I was talking to Marshal d'Estrées with my back towards it, but, looking round, I saw Marshal d'Huxelles going in. Marshal Villars said at once: "If he goes in why should not we?" and we did so. The King's back was turned towards the door by which we entered; the Duke of Orleans was facing us, looking redder than usual; M. le Duc stood by his side, and they both seemed put out about something; Cardinal Dubois and Marshal de Villeroy were on one side; M. de Fréjus was close to the King, also standing sideways, so that I could see his side-face, and he also seemed embarrassed. I leant forward to see the King's face, but quickly drew back, for he was very red and his eyes were full of tears. Marshal de Villeroy was shaking his wig about as usual. "Come, my master," he said, "do the thing with a good grace!" Fréjus stooped down, and seemed to exhort the King, but I could not hear what he said. The others maintained a gloomy silence. At last I made out that the King was unwilling to go to the Council of Regency, and they were trying to persuade him.

All this went on for a quarter of an hour; at last M. de Fréjus, after whispering to the King again, told the Duke of Orleans that he consented to go, but wanted a few minutes to compose himself. Everybody looked more cheerful at this; the Duke of Orleans told the King that there was no

hurry, and they were all bound to await his pleasure ; then he said to the rest : "The King is coming ; I think we should do well to leave him." He left the room at once, and we followed him, only M. le Duc, Marshal de Villeroy, and M. de Fréjus remaining with the King.

On our way to the Council-chamber the Duke of Orleans drew me aside, and told me that at the first mention of his marriage the King had begun to cry, and they had had the greatest difficulty in extracting a "yes" from him ; after that, they met with the same repugnance to attending the Council of Regency, as we had seen. He had not time to give me further particulars. It was essential that the King should announce his intended marriage to the Council, or at any rate be present when the announcement was made, for a matter so closely affecting him personally could not be settled in his absence.

We had not long to wait before the King entered, accompanied by M. le Duc and Marshal de Villeroy, and we took our places. All eyes were turned on the King, who looked very serious, with red and swollen eyes. The Duke of Orleans looked round the table, all the members sitting in breathless expectation ; then, turning to the King, he asked him if it was his pleasure that he should announce his approaching marriage to the Council. The reply was a dry "Yes," uttered in a tone which could be heard by the three or four nearest the King on each side of the table. The Regent then announced the marriage and the speedy arrival in France of the Infanta ; adding a few words about the suitability of the arrangement, which would draw together the two branches of the Royal House, after the untoward events which had caused a coolness between them. His remarks were brief, but well expressed, for he was an admirable speaker. He then moved that the Council approved of the marriage, and took the votes ; it is needless to say that the resolution was carried unanimously. Nobody said much ; only Marshal de Villeroy remarked that it was unfortunate that the Infanta should be so young. The Regent made another short speech, then, turning to the King with a smile, as if exhorting him to take the matter cheerfully, he said : "There, Sire, there is your marriage approved and decided : it is an important and auspicious affair happily settled !" Then he ordered the other business of the paper currency to be brought up ; and the report was

adopted, though I fancy most of the members disapproved of it. I contented myself with voting against it, almost in silence, as I had promised the Duke of Orleans. The Council then rose.

I went at once to the Palais-Royal, and the Duke of Orleans gave me a few more particulars of what had happened. There was not much to tell; the King had begun to cry directly his marriage was mentioned, and he refused to say a word to either the Regent or Cardinal Dubois till Fréjus came in. There was an anxious interval till he did come; then he told the King he ought to trust the Duke of Orleans in this matter as he did in the government of the kingdom. He whispered to him now and then; Marshal de Villeroy joined in with some curt words of encouragement; till at last they extracted a reluctant consent. Cardinal Dubois came in while we were talking, and he agreed with the Duke of Orleans that they could have done nothing without Fréjus' assistance, which he did not seem to give very willingly. They had not yet got over the anxiety they had gone through. A courier was at once despatched to Spain with the news, and another to the King of Sardinia, the King's grandfather.

Nothing could be more marked than the anger of the cabal opposed to the Regent. Up to this time Spain had been the sheet-anchor of their hopes; they could not believe that the King of Spain could ever be reconciled with the Duke of Orleans, after doing his best to bring him to the scaffold during the late reign; and their disappointment rendered them perfectly furious. It was far worse, however, a few days later, when the second engagement between the Prince of the Austurias and the Regent's daughter was given out. When Marshal de Villeroy offered his congratulations to the Regent, he could not refrain from saying, in a tone which betrayed his vexation, that he was very much astonished. I confess it was delightful to me to meet the people, both men and ladies, who composed this cabal. As I have said before, they had plucked up their spirits when M. du Maine was released, especially when the Parliament began to give trouble again; but this was a crushing blow. They began to denounce Spain and everything connected with it as violently as they had formerly praised it; and the contrast was so startling that it was easy to perceive what caused it. In fact, more was discovered from their conduct on this

occasion than from all that came to light during the inquiries into Cellamare's conspiracy ; for that affair was hushed up as much as possible in order not to implicate M. and Madame du Maine too deeply. They now raised a clamour against the Duke of Orleans, who, they said, in order to secure this great match for his daughter, had sacrificed the King to a child hardly out of her cradle, with the criminal design of postponing the time when the King could have children, in order to prolong his own power, and perhaps to facilitate his own succession to the throne. All this was treated with contempt, and the only effect of it was to hasten the arrangements for the double marriage.

It must be admitted that the project of a marriage between a daughter of the Duke of Orleans and the heir to the Spanish monarchy was singularly audacious after all that passed formerly ; it is astonishing that Dubois, who was personally odious to the Spanish Court, should have conceived it ; still more so that he should carry it through successfully. But I never knew anything about the negotiations, for Dubois kept too tight a hand over his master to let me into the secret ; indeed, I should never have known anything about the double marriage till all was settled if old friendship and old custom had not proved too strong for the Duke of Orleans, so that he grew tired of keeping me in the dark. I never questioned him much about the business, but he told me that the Spanish Court insisted on both marriages or neither ; and that Philip V was so passionately French at heart that he made no difficulties, and seemed bent on establishing his daughter on the throne of his fathers. Though, owing to the death of the Duke of Orleans, the King's marriage came to nothing, it must be admitted that this treaty was very profitable to him during the short remainder of his life ; if he had lived to the age allotted to most men, it would have been extremely advantageous to the kingdom, and the Infanta would certainly have reigned in France.

CHAPTER XIX

1721

My bickerings with Cardinal Dubois—Arguments concerning my suite and equipages—Dubois' desire to ruin me—I protest against a military escort—Sartine—My mission announced—The Duke de Liria and the Duke de Veragua—Laullez gives me much useful information and we become friends—My instructions and a question of precedence—Dubois desires to make my mission a failure—I receive the documents for my mission—Dubois' impudent proposal—Torcy resigns the Post-office—I start on my mission—My interview with the Duke d'Ossuna—My journey—My audience with the Queen-Dowager of Spain—I visit Loyola—Their Majesties of Spain become impatient—I arrive in Madrid—My audience with the King and Queen of Spain.

All this time I was engaged in bickering with Cardinal Dubois. He was furious at my being selected to go to Spain; and, as I perceived clearly throughout my preparations and indeed throughout my mission, he was determined to ruin me in pocket and in reputation. He made, however, all sorts of friendly professions; he said the embassy, with the consequent honours for my sons, was only a due mark of gratitude from the Duke of Orleans; and from himself too, considering all the kindness I had shown him in old times. But I never could get him to discuss details; he wanted to leave everything to be done in a hurry at the last moment, so that, having had no leisure to talk over my instructions with him, I might fall into the snares he intended to set for me, and be put to as much inconvenience as possible in every way.

So long as the date of my departure was distant, he slipped through my fingers like an eel; when it was near at hand he began to lecture me on the necessity for appearing with due magnificence, and wanted to hear all particulars of my suite and equipages. I explained what I proposed to do; any one else would have considered it amply sufficient, but, as his object was to ruin me, he said an Ambassador on a mission of this kind must keep up the dignity of his Sovereign; and he augmented all my estimates of what was necessary by

one-third. When I protested against the enormous expense, he said it was unavoidable, and it should be borne by the King. This point settled, he wanted to know how many coats I meant to provide for myself and my sons, and what they would be like; in short, there was not a detail connected with my table and my stables which he did not discuss; and he insisted on spending on them twice as much as I had proposed. He sent Bellisle and Leblanc to me by turns, who exhorted me, as my friends, not to dispute obstinately with a man who would be all-powerful with the Duke of Orleans during my absence, and with whom I should be in constant correspondence throughout my embassy. All that was quite true, and I had to give way; though I knew well enough that, when I had once started, they would spare the King's purse at the expense of my own.

As soon as the marriages were publicly announced I begged that my appointment as Ambassador might be announced too, in order that I might set people to work on my equipages; up to the present I had, very properly, been forbidden to do so, for fear of arousing attention. I thought there would be no difficulty about it now; but I was mistaken: the prohibition remained in force, despite all my appeals and remonstrances. The Cardinal's object was to put me to double expense by having everything done in a hurry, in which he succeeded; he also hoped that something essential might be forgotten, for which he would be able to blame me. I kept on pressing the point, however; and also begged that I might be allowed to talk over my instructions, for that at any rate would not arouse public attention. But even this was refused; the Cardinal said casually that a couple of short conversations would be quite sufficient. The fact is, he wanted to make my instructions as vague as possible, and to give me no time to clear up doubtful points; in hopes that I should commit some foolish blunder, and expose myself to a reprimand. At last I got tired of all this; and, choosing a time when I knew I should find him alone, I went to see the Duke of Orleans at the Tuileries. I put my position before him so forcibly that he told me to accompany him at once to the King's room, where my appointment was settled and announced publicly. The Duke of Orleans then took me in his own carriage to the Palais-Royal, where we began to talk seriously about my embassy.

I fancy that Cardinal Dubois was by no means pleased at

this declaration, especially as it was made without his knowledge ; but he had to make the best of it. He was now as impatient for the completion of my equipages as he had previously been dilatory, and sent repeatedly to hurry on the workmen. He sent for a sample of the coats to be worn by each member of my suite, including livery servants, and insisted on their being made more magnificent and costly ; he also inspected all the coats made for myself and my sons. He was in such a hurry to get rid of me that he had all my baggage sent to Bayonne on light drays drawn by post-horses : not at all a cheap arrangement for me. He asked who were the persons composing my suite, telling me that it must be numerous. I named the Count de Lorge, the Count de Céreste, my two sons, the Abbé de Saint-Simon, and his brother, an officer of distinction, who had served in Spain and was extremely useful to me there (I afterwards gave him the appointment of King's Lieutenant at Blaye) ; there was also the Abbé de Mathan, a friend of the Abbé de Saint-Simon, who afterwards became a friend of my own. Céreste was brother to M. de Brancas, a great friend of mine, but twenty-five years younger ; he himself was my son's friend. I became well acquainted with this young man during our travels, and found him extremely pleasant and well-informed ; our acquaintance ripened into friendship, which has lasted ever since.

Cardinal Dubois expressed himself satisfied with the choice of those persons ; but I was much surprised when he sent Bellisle to me shortly afterwards to say that I must take with me about forty officers chosen from my sons' cavalry regiments and the Marquis de Saint-Simon's infantry regiment. I protested strongly against this ; no Ambassador had ever been attended by a military escort except M. de Lavardin, when he went to Rome to protest against the abolition of ambassadorial franchises by Innocent XI ; and in that case an escort was necessary for his protection. But I was going on a peaceful errand, and required no escort ; it would not only be extremely expensive, but likely to give me more worries than all the rest of my mission ; for a number of thoughtless young men, with their French notions of gallantry, would be almost sure to get into trouble. But my remonstrances were quite useless ; the Cardinal was determined to ruin me if he could, and he thought rightly that the expense of maintaining forty officers would go some

way towards doing so. We could not find quite that number, however ; I only took twenty-nine, and, though the Cardinal was so far successful in his attack on my purse, the young gentlemen behaved so well that I was spared the other troubles which he anticipated for me.

He wrote to Sartine desiring him to procure mules, Spanish servants, and provisions for me and my suite ; and Sartine carried out his commission very well. He was a native of Lyons, originally a banker, who had settled in Spain. He had the general superintendence of the commissariat of the Spanish armies, and was frequently consulted about the movements of the troops ; the King of Spain liked him personally, and he was generally liked and respected by the Ministers and leading men. He made himself very useful to me during my sojourn in Spain, and I have kept up his acquaintance.

Now that I was at liberty to talk about my mission, my first care was to write to the Duke of Berwick, and to see Amelot and the Duke de St. Aignan, who had all spent a considerable time in Spain, in order to get as much information as possible about the country. They were very obliging ; the Duke de St. Aignan furnished me with most useful particulars concerning the leading personages ; and Marshal Berwick, besides giving me something of the same kind in a condensed form, did me a real service by writing to his son, the Duke de Liria, requesting him to do all he could for me. He carried out his father's instructions most thoroughly ; he even condescended to help Sartine in completing my outfit, and I may say that but for him I should have found nothing ready on my arrival ; for the time was very short, considering the indolent and procrastinating habits of the Spaniards. The Duke de Liria also procured me the intimate acquaintance of his brother-in-law, the Duke de Veragua.

This Duke was a singular character. Though a young man, he had held the highest offices with credit to himself. He was extremely clever, with a highly cultivated mind. His appearance was very mean, and he was extremely dirty in his person ; but his eyes were full of wit and intelligence. He was very agreeable and amusing, and took a joke at his own expense very well. His friends called him familiarly Don Puerco, and once, when we were dining with the Duke de Liria, it was suggested to him that he should dine at the

sideboard because he was too dirty to sit down with us at table! He took this as a capital joke, and was not in the least offended. He and his sister, the Duchess de Liria, were extremely fond of each other, and when he died unmarried long afterwards, all his enormous wealth passed to her and her children.

Laullez [1] was at this time the Spanish Minister at Paris. He was an Irishman, a tall, good-looking man, who had been on the staff of the Abbé d'Estrées when he was our Ambassador in Spain. At the time when the King of Spain was forming a body-guard on the model of that of our King, the Abbé d'Estrées recommended Laullez to him as a brave, intelligent, and honest man, likely to be useful. By this means Laullez became known to the King, to his first Queen, and to Madame des Ursins; and he soon acquired their confidence to such a degree that he was employed on several secret and delicate commissions, which he carried out very well. At the time when he was appointed Minister to France he was a Lieutenant-General and Major of the body-guards; soon after my arrival in Spain he received the character of Ambassador, at the same time as Maulevrier at Madrid. I was anxious to make his acquaintance, which I did through M. de Lausun, who received a great many foreigners at his house. He gave me much useful information, and did a good deal to facilitate matters for me in Spain; we got on together so well that a real friendship sprang up between us which lasted beyond his own life. He remained in France as Ambassador till the Infanta was sent back to Spain, when he returned with her; afterwards he became governor of Majorca, where he died. He left two unmarried sisters, who wrote to ask my help in obtaining payment of some money due to their brother from the Government; and I used the good offices of my friends to procure it for them.

After a good deal of trouble and wilful delay on the part of Cardinal Dubois, I managed to obtain a copy of my instructions. Nothing particular was enjoined as to visits or ceremonial observances; I was merely told to conform to the practice of the Duke de St. Aignan, and Cardinal Dubois sent me an abstract of the ceremonial practices observed by and towards all our Ambassadors in Spain since the time of M. de la Feuillade, afterwards Bishop of Metz. As I could not doubt that I was dealing with an enemy, I was

[1] Don Patricio Laullez—Patrick Lawless, in fact.

anxious to have rules laid down for me even in the most trifling matters, so as to leave as little scope as possible for his malignity; so I returned my instructions with several remarks and questions written in the margin, to which the Cardinal replied pretty clearly. But I soon found out where he was setting a trap for me. I had several conversations with him on the subject, in one of which he remarked casually that I was to take the first place at the signature of the King's marriage-contract, and also at the wedding of the Prince of the Asturias; and to allow no one, without exception, to take precedence of me. I observed that this could not be expected in the case of the Nuncio, who was always allowed precedence by our ambassadors, and even by those of the Emperor, who took precedence of ours. He said that was the general rule, but this case was exceptional, and he must insist on my doing as he said.

Hoping to touch his pride, I asked him what I was to do if any Cardinals were present at these functions; and also whether I was to take precedence of the majordomo-major, an officer who holds a post resembling that of Grand-Master of the Ceremonies at our Court, but very superior to it. He grew angry, and said certainly I must precede the majordomo-major; as for Cardinals, he assured me that none would be present. I shrugged my shoulders, and said I hoped he would reflect on the matter. Instead of answering, he said there was another very essential point which he had forgotten; I must on no account pay the first visit to any one. I replied that the question of visits was mentioned in my instructions; I was to conform to the practice of the Duke de St. Aignan, and he, like all Ambassadors before him, had paid the first visit to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and also to the Councillors of State where there were any. Thereupon he lost his temper completely, talked pompously about the King's dignity, and would not let me say a word. I cut my visit short and left him.

I thought it would be as well to consult the Duke de St. Aignan and Amelot about these new verbal instructions. They were much surprised at them; both said they were contrary to all precedent; and that to claim precedence over the Nuncio, no matter on what occasion, would be an unheard-of proceeding. Amelot told me, further, that I should lay myself open to all sorts of slights and rebuffs if I refused the first visit to the Minister for Foreign Affairs;

that to the Councillors of State did not matter, for they no longer had any real authority ; but he added that it had always been customary for our Ambassadors to pay the first visit to the holders of the three great offices. I will explain what they are later on. If I refused to pay the first visits in these cases, he said, I should find that no person of distinction would call on me, or speak to me at the palace.

From what Amelot told me I perceived Cardinal Dubois' object in giving me these new verbal instructions. He wanted to make my mission a failure, and to expose me to a reprimand on my return ; I was to begin by offending the greatest personages in Spain, including the Minister through whose hands everything relating to my embassy must necessarily pass ; complaints would probably be made, when he would flatly deny ever having given me such orders, and consequently bring down on me the displeasure of the Duke of Orleans. If, on the other hand, I disobeyed these instructions (and he had told me particularly to report having carried them out), he would accuse me of sacrificing the King's dignity in order to obtain the title of Grandee and the Golden Fleece for my sons ; and I should be forbidden to accept these favours. As regards the Nuncio, the Court of Rome would certainly complain and demand reparation ; and that reparation in Cardinal Dubois' hands would take the form of my recall in disgrace. I appealed to the Duke of Orleans to get these instructions changed, but in vain ; the Cardinal's influence was too strong for him ; I saw clearly what I must expect during my absence from the malignity of the valet and the weakness of the master ; and there was nothing for it but to take such precautions as I could.

The Cardinal did all he could to hasten my departure, and indeed there was no time to be lost ; he was perpetually sending to hurry up the workmen who were busy with my preparations, and was sorry, I think, to find so many employed that he had no excuse for adding to their number. Nothing remained, on his part, but to give me the letters which I was to carry, and this he postponed till the very day before I started ; we shall soon see why. These letters were from the King and the Duke of Orleans to their Catholic Majesties, to the Queen-Dowager at Bayonne, and to the Prince of the Asturias. The Duke of Orleans told me that he had written duplicate letters to the Prince of the Asturias,

one giving him the treatment of Brother and Nephew, the other of Nephew only; he said he particularly wished the first to be delivered, nevertheless I was not to make a fuss about it if I found that they raised any objection, but in that case to deliver the other letter.

I have reason to think that this was another of Cardinal Dubois' treacherous suggestions; he hoped I should be forced to make a concession personally offensive to the Duke of Orleans, in which case he would have made the most of it to my disadvantage. The Duke of Orleans was the last man in the world to attach importance to matters concerning his personal dignity. The treatment of "Brother" implies equality; now there could be no pretence of equality between the Prince of the Asturias, heir to the Crown of Spain, and the Duke of Orleans, for the fact of his being Regent made no difference whatever in this respect. A claim on the Regent's part to correspond with the Prince of the Asturias on terms of equality of style and treatment was, in fact, quite unprecedented and unwarrantable; yet I was ordered to make it, Cardinal Dubois hoping and fully believing that I should be unsuccessful.

On the morning before my departure I received the various documents which I was to take with me; but, on looking through them, I was surprised to find no letter from the King to the Infanta. I called attention to the omission, and was told, to my surprise, that the letter was not yet written, but I should have it during the course of the day. But, though I sent repeatedly to remind the Cardinal, midnight arrived, and still there was no letter; so that I had to start without it. I was assured that I should have it before I arrived at Bayonne, or Madrid at the farthest; but it never arrived. There could be no great difficulty in composing a letter from the King to the Infanta, so the delay must have been deliberate; what its object could be I do not know, unless the Cardinal wanted the Spaniards to believe that I was a careless person, and had lost the letter.

I omitted to mention that about a week earlier he made me a most impudent proposal. He sent me word by Belleisle and Leblanc that, in his position as Foreign Minister, it was absolutely necessary that he should have the control of the Post-office; as he knew I was an intimate friend of Torcy's, he wished me to write to him at once, and induce him to resign his office, sending the letter by a special

courier to Sablé, where Torcy was. From the result of this application of mine, the Cardinal said he would judge how far he could depend on me, and he would regulate his conduct towards me accordingly. His two slaves gave me to understand that if I did not do my best to satisfy him in this matter he would probably put a stop to my embassy. From what I had already seen of the Duke of Orleans' weakness, I did not doubt that the Cardinal had it in his power to carry out his threat; but I determined to risk it rather than lend myself to an act of violence towards a wise, honest, and trustworthy friend like Torcy; a man, too, who had served the State with credit to himself, and deserved well of his country. I told these gentlemen I thought they had brought me a very queer commission, and the sauce they had served it up with was queerer still. Torcy, I said, was not a man to be stripped of an office of trust which he had held with credit ever since his father-in-law's death; I would go so far as to ask him whether he was willing to resign it, and if so, on what conditions; but if the Cardinal expected me to use my influence as a friend to persuade him to do so, he was mistaken; and they might tell him flatly that I would do nothing of the sort. I added that I knew I was in his power as regarded my embassy, but I was determined not to go an inch beyond what I had already said. They did their best to persuade me, but had to depart with this message.

Castries and his brother the Archbishop, both friends of mine, were very intimate with Torcy; I sent for them and told them what had occurred. They were extremely indignant; not so much at the thing itself, for Torcy had always expected that the Cardinal would try, sooner or later, to get the Post-office into his own hands, but at the way in which he had set about it. They thanked me warmly, and approved of the letter which I had written to Torcy. It reached him immediately, for he had left Sablé sooner than he had originally intended, and my courier met his carriage in the park of Versailles. He came to see me next day; he did not seem to care in the least about keeping the Post-office, only he wished to give it up on terms honourable to himself. On the other hand, Dubois did not mind what his terms were so long as he resigned, so he had no difficulty in arranging them with the Duke of Orleans; he was given a pension of 60,000 livres, besides some ready money. He

was very grateful to me for acting as I had done, and our intimate friendship endured till his death, some years later. He proved his regard for me by giving me his Memoirs, with which I have enriched my own[1]: they were not written, however, till some time after the death of the Duke of Orleans.

At last, on the 23rd of October, I started on my mission, accompanied by my sons, the Count de Lorge, the Abbé de Saint-Simon, and his brother; the rest of my suite were to join me at Blaye and Bayonne. We slept at Orleans, Montrichard, and Poitiers. I intended to sleep at Ruffec the next night; on my way thither, at Vivonne, I met the Duke d'Ossuna, who had been sent by the Spanish Court on a similar mission to mine, and was travelling towards Paris. We had a long conversation at the post-house; he did not speak French very well, but sufficiently so to enable him to make himself intelligible. After an exchange of compliments and congratulations, he began talking of the proposed marriages; of the way with which they were received by all true Frenchmen and Spaniards, and of the deep vexation of the disaffected in both countries. I was surprised to find him so well-informed respecting our cabals, especially the party known as that of the "old Court." Without mentioning names, he complained of several persons who had always professed great attachment to the King of Spain, but who, since the announcement of the marriages, had done nothing but denounce Spain and everything connected with it. He said the Duke of Orleans had more domestic enemies than he suspected, and begged me to warn him; adding that the sooner the marriages were celebrated the better, for there were persons both in our Court and at Madrid who would do their best to postpone them, in hopes of breaking them off altogether. At the same time, he said, no one would venture to hint such a thing to their Catholic Majesties, who were delighted at the prospect of the marriages, and fully perceived how advantageous they would be to both countries.

It took some time to bring him to this point, for at first he was very reserved, and I had great difficulty in drawing him out. As may be supposed, I made more use of my

[1] These portions of Saint-Simon's Memoirs have been almost entirely omitted in this translation. Except to a person anxious to study the diplomatic history of the period, they are intolerably dull.

ears than of my tongue during our conversation. I begged him to tell the Duke of Orleans all he had told me, which he promised to do ; I could not, however, get him to promise to mention names, though he did not say he would not. I could see that, in saying as much as he had, he had been actuated more by personal politeness than by any wish to speak openly on this important but delicate topic. We parted with many embraces and reciprocal assurances of friendship ; he insisted on accompanying me to my carriage, but I would not enter it while he was present.

After this the axle-tree of my carriage broke, and I was detained at Couhé for more than three hours, which I employed in writing to the Duke of Orleans and Cardinal Dubois, giving them an account of my conversation with the Duke d'Ossuna. Owing to these delays it was nearly midnight when I reached Ruffec, where many of the neighbouring gentlemen had been awaiting me from an early hour. I entertained them at dinner and supper during the two days which I spent there. It was a real pleasure to me to meet Puy-Robert, who commanded the Royal-Roussillon regiment while I was serving in it as Captain. A journey of two days brought me to Blaye, where I again found many of the country gentlemen awaiting my arrival. I spent two days there, inspecting the place and its outlying forts ; the weather was very bad, but I made a point of seeing everything, accompanied by my son, who had the reversion of my governorship. Boucher, the Intendant of Bordeaux, brought his own brigantine, magnificently fitted up, to Blaye to take me down the river to Bordeaux, with smaller craft sufficient to carry all my suite and most of the gentlemen who had come to meet me. The weather was so rough that I was advised to put off my departure, but I had been allowed only a specified time for stoppages on the road, and I did not wish to exceed it. I was much struck by the first view of the harbour and town of Bordeaux ; I found more than three hundred vessels of all nationalities decked with flags and drawn up in two lines, between which we sailed, amid much firing of cannon from the ships and from Château-Trompette. I remained three days at Bordeaux, during which I entertained the principal officials at dinner and supper. At last, after thanking M. and Madame Boucher warmly for their hospitality, I started for Bayonne, crossing the "landes."

I was received there by d'Adoncourt, the Commandant, who put up my sons and myself in his own house, while the rest of my staff were accommodated in the neighbourhood. I was detained four days at Bayonne, as we had to take fresh carriages, and our baggage had also to be transferred to other vehicles. Nothing could exceed d'Adoncourt's kindness during our stay; he rode to meet us a league outside the town, accompanied by a number of officers; and of course I had to submit to official receptions and discharges of artillery, as at Bordeaux.

Pecquet, formerly chief-clerk to Torcy, who had virtually managed all the business of the Foreign Office while Marshal d'Huxelles presided over the Council for Foreign Affairs, had asked me to take his son with me to Spain; and the son had gone on ahead of us. A courier from Spain had just arrived when I entered Bayonne, bringing a letter from Sartine, in which he said that the King of Spain, hearing of Pecquet's arrival, was vexed at my own delay; for their Catholic Majesties had decided on accompanying the Infanta on her journey as far as Burgos, and could not start till I made my appearance; they begged me to hasten my journey as much as possible.

I wrote back to Sartine, asking him to assure their Catholic Majesties that I had wasted no time on the road, and to explain to them that I had only received my Spanish passports on the 29th of November. As they had expressed a fear lest my delay should throw back the exchange of the Princesses to the worst part of the winter, I asked him further to submit that my arrival at Madrid a few days earlier or later would make no difference in that respect, for, in spite of the desire of the King and the Duke of Orleans to complete the arrangements quickly, it had been found impossible to fix an earlier date for Mademoiselle de Montpensier's departure than the 15th of November, and, owing to bad roads and her numerous equipages, it would take her fifteen days to reach the frontier, so that, as the Infanta had not nearly so far to go, there was no reason to hurry her departure from Madrid. I assured him that I would hasten my journey as much as possible, and only regretted that my passports had been made out by way of Vittoria, instead of by the shorter road by Pampeluna, which I should have preferred.

On the 9th of November, the day after my arrival at

Bayonne, I sent to the Duchess of Linarez, *camarera-major* to the Queen-Dowager of Spain, asking for an audience of Her Majesty, who at once sent her own carriage for me. She was living in a country house not far from the town ; I was surprised to see how small it was, it had only two windows in front, and its depth was not much larger. Entering from a small courtyard I was conducted along a narrow passage into an oblong room, looking into a fine large garden. Here the Queen was waiting to receive me, attended by the Duchess de Linarez and a few other persons. I presented the King's congratulations and a letter from him ; she replied very politely with regard to the King, and said some kind things to myself. She remained standing throughout the interview, and conversed with me a little about the suitability of the marriages, the time fixed for the exchange of Princesses, and my journey ; only the Duchess de Linarez and d'Adoncourt joined in the conversation, and they said little. I presented my sons and the gentlemen who had accompanied me, and the Queen said something gracious to each of them, speaking very good French.

In person she was very tall, with a fine upright figure, and it was easy to see that she had formerly been handsome ; she wore a costume which was neither French nor Spanish, entirely black, with a veil, and a long train the end of which was held loosely by the Duchess de Linarez. Her veil did not conceal her hair, and the austerity of her widow's dress was mitigated by a very large brooch of most beautiful diamonds. At the close of my audience she caused me to be invited to dinner at a house in Bayonne where most of her officers lived. The Sieur de Bruges, chief of her household, did the honours ; the dinner, which was attended by the Bishop of Bayonne, d'Adoncourt, and all the chief members of my suite, was very good and magnificent. I had a second audience of the Queen next day to thank her for her hospitality ; she conversed with me more familiarly on this occasion, and confided to me the distress to which she was reduced by having received no payments from the Spanish Court for several years ; she asked me to mention this to their Catholic Majesties and try to obtain for her a portion of the considerable sum due to her.

Next day I resumed my journey. As I passed through the Pyrenees and quitted France I also left behind the incessant

rain which had accompanied me hitherto, and found a clear sky and a delightful temperature. We were all mounted on mules, which walked at a swift, yet easy pace; and the ever-varying peeps and views among the mountains were charming. I made a digression from the main road to visit Loyola, the birthplace of the famous St. Ignatius. We were received there by four or five Jesuits, very polite and intelligent persons, who were superintending the construction of a building intended to accommodate more than a hundred Jesuits and an immense number of scholars. They showed us the original dwelling-place of St. Ignatius' father, which is quite small, hardly large enough for a village parsonage, and not in the least like a *château*. We saw the room where St. Ignatius was long confined to his bed by wounds received in battle, and where he had the famous revelation concerning the society which he was to found; we also saw the stable which his mother chose for her lying-in, in pious recollection of the stable at Bethlehem. Both house and stable are extremely mean and small, but they are now splendidly adorned with gold, and in each is a magnificent altar, on which the Holy Sacrament is always present. The new church was nearly finished; it is a round building of surprising height and vastness, with altars, all exactly alike, arranged round it; its architecture is admirable, and it is lavishly adorned with gilding, painting, sculpture, the most exquisite marble, jasper, porphyry, and lapis-lazuli; yet everything is in perfect taste; in a word, it will be one of the most superb edifices in Europe. The Jesuits gave us the best chocolate I ever tasted, and after some hours spent in sight-seeing and admiring we regained our road, and arrived very late at our quarters for the night.

On the 15th of November we arrived at Vittoria, where I found a deputation of four gentlemen of distinction awaiting me with a present of some excellent wine. I asked them to supper; they spoke French, and I was surprised to find Spaniards so merry and such good company at table. The object of my mission was extremely popular both in France and Spain, and ensured me a hearty welcome wherever I went. People ran to the windows to see me as I passed, and wished me good luck. At Salinas, where I did not intend to stop, a number of ladies, apparently of quality, were assembled at their windows: they asked so politely to be allowed to see the Ambassador who was about to set the seal

to the happiness of Spain that I thought I could hardly refuse to go in. They were highly delighted, and I had considerable difficulty in getting away from them.

On the 17th I was just starting from Miranda del Ebro, at five o'clock in the morning, when I received a letter from Sartine, informing me that my letter from Bayonne, though its arguments were unanswerable, had not allayed the impatience of their Catholic Majesties; so I wrote back telling him to procure as many relays of horses as possible, regardless of cost. I hoped, however, to be allowed to spend one day at Burgos, for I was very uneasy about my eldest son, who was suffering from fever. But when I arrived there on the 18th I found Pecquet, who begged me so urgently to hurry on that I had to leave my son and most of my suite behind, and start immediately. The Abbé de Mathan was kind enough to stay at Burgos and look after my son. The cause of all this impatience on the part of their Catholic Majesties, so Pecquet informed me, was that the Queen, who hated Madrid, was fidgeting with impatience to get away to Lerma, where she was told that game was abundant. He said that M. de Grimaldo and Sartine had done their best to persuade her to give up this journey, or at any rate to postpone it; but that her impatience was encouraged by Maulevrier, our Minister at Madrid. He was very angry at being superseded on this occasion by a special Ambassador of distinction, particularly by me; he gave out that he should not have minded so much if it had been the Duke de Villeroy, La Feuillade, or the Prince de Rohan. This Seigneur Andrault, so touchy about his own dignity, did not want to have anything to do with a friend of the Duke of Orleans; he seemed to have forgotten his own insignificance; more than that, he forgot that it lay with me to confer on him the character of an Ambassador or not, as I thought fit. However, I resolved to take no notice of his folly, and to treat him as if I had not heard of his remarks; but I let Cardinal Dubois know about them.

I left Burgos on the 19th, with my second son, the Count de Lorge, the Abbé de Saint-Simon and his brother, and one or two more of my suite, taking very few servants. We travelled day and night till we reached Madrid; as the relays of horses were badly arranged, we used the carriages of the corregidors when we could borrow them; but we had to do the last twelve leagues on horseback. It was not till eleven

o'clock on the night of the 21st that we arrived at Madrid. At the entrance to the town the guard stopped us and asked who we were and where we came from ; they had orders to look out for us and give immediate notice of my arrival. As it was very late, and I was extremely tired, I replied that we formed part of the suite of the French Ambassador, who would himself arrive next day. I heard afterwards that Grimaldo and Sartine had both calculated that I could not arrive before the 22nd.

The first thing I did on reaching my house was to send for Sartine, giving strict orders that no one else was to be admitted. He told me that, assisted by the Duke de Liria, who had been good enough to take a great deal of trouble, he had made such arrangements that in two days I should be able to appear in public, and in a week my equipages would be complete and I could have my formal audience. Next morning Sartine accompanied my secretary to see the Marquis de Grimaldo, while I sent the usual messages to the other foreign Ministers. Grimaldo was surprised to hear of my arrival, and went off to the palace at once to announce it to their Catholic Majesties, who, in their impatience to leave Madrid, were highly delighted. From the palace, Grimaldo came to see me, without waiting for me to pay him the first visit ; Maulevrier, the Duke de Liria, and one or two others were with me when he arrived. Following his example, the holders of the three great offices also called on me the same day, as well as all the grandees, principal officials, and leading noblemen who happened to be at Madrid. Thus the embarrassment caused by my instructions on the subject of first visits was cleared away, to my great relief.

Grimaldo, after many polite compliments, asked me whether it would suit me better to pay my respects to their Catholic Majesties in the morning or afternoon. I thought it more becoming to do so at the earliest possible moment ; so we drove off to the palace at once in Maulevrier's carriage, accompanied by him. The King was at Mass when we arrived there ; and we waited his return in the small saloon between the Grandees' room and the Hall of Mirrors. We had not long to wait ; in a few minutes the King entered from the Grandees' Saloon ; as he did so Grimaldo told him that I was there, and he came up to me directly, surrounded by a certain number of courtiers, but not by nearly such a crowd as we are accustomed to see at our Court. I bowed

profoundly ; whereupon he told me how glad he was to see me, questioned me about my journey, and asked after my eldest son, who, he had heard, was ill and had to be left behind at Burgos ; then he went on by himself into the Hall of Mirrors. I was immediately surrounded by courtiers, who congratulated me and expressed their joy at the approaching marriages. Grimaldo and the Duke de Liria presented the principal noblemen to me ; they nearly all spoke French, and made me polite speeches, to which I did my best to reply suitably.

In about ten minutes the King sent for me, and I went alone into the Hall of Mirrors. It is a vast gallery, not very wide, but very long ; the King and Queen were standing side by side at the far end. I went up to them with three low bows, and my audience lasted half an hour (for one has to wait till they signify that it is over) ; during that time they expressed their joy at the approaching marriages with evident warmth and sincerity ; they also spoke very kindly of the Duke of Orleans, and, showing me portraits of our King and Mademoiselle de Montpensier, said they hoped to succeed in making the young Princess happy.

At the end of the conversation, in which the Queen took the leading part, they did me the honour of saying that they wished to show me their children. In obedience to their commands, I followed them through the Queen's room and a number of others into the suite of rooms set apart for the Infanta. I never saw prettier children than Don Ferdinand and Don Carlos, nor a finer baby than Don Philip. The King and Queen showed them to me with evident pleasure, and made them walk up and down before me, which they did very willingly. Then we passed into the Infanta's nursery, and I tried to look as gallant as I could ; she was really charming, not at all shy, with a little air of gravity about her. The Queen told me that the Infanta was already beginning to speak French quite well, whereupon the King said that she would soon forget Spain. "Oh!" cried the Queen, "not only Spain, but the King and myself, to attach herself solely to the King, her husband!" I did my best to make a suitable reply. Their Majesties then reconducted me back to the Hall of Mirrors, and put an end to my audience, with many kind expressions ; but I had not been in the saloon more than a few minutes when the King called me in again, to present me to the Prince of the Asturias.

I found him tall, and really a subject for an artist ; his hair was fair and abundant, his complexion also fair and fresh-coloured ; his face was long, but agreeable, with fine eyes, though they were rather too close to his nose. His manner seemed pleasant and polite. He asked particularly after the King ; also after the Duke of Orleans and Mademoiselle de Montpensier, inquiring when she was likely to arrive.

Their Catholic Majesties expressed themselves much satisfied with the despatch I had used in my journey ; they said they had put off their departure in order to give me time to make the necessary preparations for my audiences, but they thought it would be needless for me to have more than one ; the articles could be signed the day before it, and the marriage contract in the afternoon of the same day. Then they asked when I should be ready, to which I replied that I should be ready on the day that best suited them, for my preparations were being made solely in their honour, and I thought I should consult their wishes better by appearing in rather less splendour than by delaying their departure in order to wait till everything was complete. They seemed highly satisfied with this reply ; but they declined to fix a day for my audience, whereupon I suggested the following Tuesday. Their faces showed how much they were pleased by this promptitude ; they retired to a little distance and conferred together in a low voice ; then, returning to the Prince of the Asturias and myself, announced that they had fixed Thursday, the 27th, as the date of their departure for Lerma. They not only gave me permission to accompany them thither, but enjoined me strictly to follow them closely, on account of the difficulty in obtaining lodgings on the way. This brought my audience to a final close.

CHAPTER XX

1721

My magnificent entertainment—Cellamare's behaviour—I call on Grimaldo and present my letters—Still no letter for the Infanta—I have an interview with Maulevrier and present him with his credentials as Ambassador—Impressions of the King and Queen and Grimaldo—Private audience with their Majesties—My public audience—Message from the King of Spain—My addresses—The King's reply—Magny—My audience with the Queen of Spain—Maulevrier's behaviour—The duplicate marriage contracts—I carry out Cardinal Dubois' orders by some strategy—The French copy of the marriage contract is not forthcoming—My protest—Dubois' letter to Maulevrier—I feign unconcern.

When I returned to my house I found that Don Gaspard Giron, the senior major-domo, had taken possession of it with some of the royal officials; and till the following Wednesday he entertained me very magnificently, inviting a great many noblemen, and doing the honours. During this time one of the King's carriages was always stationed before my door, and I had to use it; it was drawn by four mules, driven by one of the royal coachmen; and several of the King's footmen in livery were in attendance. This treatment is customary in the case of special Ambassadors. If I dilate on the honours I received, it is merely to show what rejoicing was caused by the subject of my mission; it was extreme, and that was why ordinary rules were passed over in some things, such as the matter of the first visit. But indeed I received the warmest welcome from everybody, and the utmost kindness during the whole of my stay in Spain.

There were, however, two great noblemen whose conduct towards me afforded a singular contrast. Cellamare, who had assumed the title of Duke de Giovenazzo since his father's death, surpassed the whole Court in polite attentions to me, in protestations of joy at the approaching marriages, and in expressions of gratitude for the kind treatment he had received in France. He begged me to

inform the King and the Duke of Orleans of them, and, rather inconsiderately, launched out into expressions of esteem for Marshal de Villeroy, to whom he said he was going to write. I received these effusions politely, but with extreme surprise, considering the plot in which he had been so deeply implicated and all that had happened to him in consequence. He kept up these professions of attachment throughout my sojourn in Spain ; but he never dined at my house. I only asked him once, as a matter of form, on the occasion of my son's being made a Grandee of Spain. The other person of distinction, whose conduct contrasted so singularly with Cellamare's, was the Duke de Popoli, Grand-master of the Artillery and governor to the Prince of the Asturias ; he made me sundry polite speeches at the palace, where I rarely met him, but only called on me once. We shall see later on how I dealt with him.

Later in the day I went to see the Marquis de Grimaldo, Minister for Foreign Affairs. He understood French perfectly, but did not like speaking it, so Orondaya, his chief clerk, acted as interpreter. He received me with the greatest cordiality ; and I was very much astonished at his referring to the efforts I had made to dissuade the Regent from going to war with Spain ; I cannot imagine how Laullez came to hear of them, but he reported them to Grimaldo very soon after his arrival at Paris. I presented to Grimaldo copies of the letters which I was instructed to deliver ; he refused to accept them at first, and we had a polite dispute about it, but I had a reason for insisting. I wanted to pass the letter from the Duke of Orleans to the Prince of the Asturias styling him " Brother," and to do so without risk it was necessary that Grimaldo should see a copy of it beforehand. If he had raised any objection I should have substituted the other letter ; but he did not, so I delivered the first letter next day to the Prince of the Austurias, and not a word was said about it. It gave me much pleasure to return the letter, not giving the treatment of " Brother," to the Duke of Orleans.

One difficulty remained ; I had no letter for the Infanta. I confided this to Grimaldo, who laughed and said he could get me out of it ; he promised that next day, when I asked for an audience of the Infanta, her governess should tell me that she was asleep, but she would awaken her if I

wished; I should decline this, and not ask for another audience till my letter for her had arrived.

In the evening I communicated to Maulevrier the instructions I had received for my mission, and also gave him the documents conferring on him the character of an Ambassador. Before I go any further I must give an account of the impression made on me by the King and Queen of Spain, and by the Marquis de Grimaldo. My first sight of the King surprised me so much that I almost lost my presence of mind. There was not a trace of the Duke of Anjou whom I remembered. His face was much changed; it seemed to have grown longer, and showed even less intelligence than when he left France. He stooped a good deal, and had lost much of his height; his chin protruded; his knees were more than a foot apart, yet his feet touched each other and brushed together as he walked, though in spite of this he could walk fast. When he did me the honour of addressing me he said quite the right things, but his words came from him in such a drawling way, and he looked so stupid, that I was quite confounded. He was just going out shooting, and his costume did not set off his person to advantage; he wore a *justaucorps* of a sort of rough brown material, with no gold about it; his wig was tied back; over his *justaucorps* he wore his blue ribbon, as he invariably did, in such a way as almost to conceal the badge of the Golden Fleece which was hung round his neck by a red ribbon. I shall have occasion to speak further of this monarch.

The appearance of the Queen, to whom, as I have already said, I was presented about a quarter of an hour later, was equally startling, for her face was dreadfully seamed and disfigured by small-pox. The dress then in fashion among Spanish ladies, which had been invented by the Princess des Ursins, was very becoming to young and pretty women, but not so favourable to older ladies with defective figures. The Queen, however, had a beautiful figure; she was above the medium height, rather thin at that time, but her bust and shoulders were well shaped, rather full and very white, as were her arms and hands; and her waist was slim and elegant. She spoke French very well, though with a slight Italian accent; her voice and enunciation were agreeable, and she expressed herself well. Her manner was full of unstudied grace; her bearing was always dignified and majestic, and it was impossible to forget who she was,

yet she showed so much natural politeness and often such amiable familiarity, that any one admitted to the honour of private conversation with her soon felt at his ease, and ceased to notice the disfigurement of her face. Indeed, when one became used to seeing her it was easy to perceive that she had formerly possessed beauty and charms which the cruel ravages of small-pox had not entirely effaced. Though I mentioned private conversation with her I must explain that the King was always present; whatever their occupations might be, business, amusement, audiences, worship, they never quitted each other for a moment, night or day; except on the occasion of certain very rare public functions which they had to attend separately.

Grimaldo, though a native of Spain, was much more like a Fleming in person. He was a short, fat, little man with fair hair, blue eyes, and a rosy face; in conversation he gesticulated freely with his little hands, though he kept them glued to his paunch all the time. This was not a very taking exterior, but his face was clever and acute, and his expression good-natured. He was a very capable and experienced Minister, a sound patriot, and devoted to the King personally, a man of honour, and as open and frank as it is possible to be in an office such as his; yet a thorough courtier, and very lavish of his compliments. His policy was always that of close union with France. This is enough for the present about this Minister; I was fortunate enough to gain his confidence, and his friendship was very useful to me; we kept it up till his death, which did not occur till some years after his dismissal from office. I must now return to the affairs of my embassy.

On Sunday the 23rd I had a private audience of the King and Queen for the purpose of presenting the letters of the King and the Duke of Orleans. Maulevrier accompanied me; and at the end of the audience I presented the Count de Lorge, the Count de Céreste, my younger son, the Abbé de Saint-Simon, and his brother, to their Catholic Majesties, who said a few kind words to each of them. They were particularly gracious to me, and asked after my eldest son; but they took hardly any notice of Maulevrier. Afterwards I had an audience of the Prince of the Asturias, for the same purpose, and asked for one with the Infanta, but received the answer previously arranged with Grimaldo. Next day the preliminary articles of the

contract of marriage between our King and the Infanta were duly signed by Maulevrier and myself, and by the Marquis de Bedmar and Grimaldo on behalf of Spain. When this business was over, acting on instructions which I had specially asked for, I informed Grimaldo that the Duke of Orleans and Cardinal Dubois had been much pleased by the King of Spain giving Laullez, his Minister at Paris, the character of Ambassador, and that they would be gratified if His Majesty would bestow on him some further mark of his favour. I wished particularly to do Laullez a service, for every day showed me that he had done all in his power to be useful to me in Spain. I could see by the way in which Grimaldo received this message that the Spanish Court was satisfied with Laullez ; and shortly afterwards he wrote to him by the King's command, promising him the first favour which it should be in his power to grant.

On Tuesday, the 25th of November, I had my public audience. Maulevrier, who had not thought it necessary to put himself to any extra expense on receiving his appointment as Ambassador, came to my house pretty early in the morning. Some time afterwards Don Gaspard Giron arrived in a magnificent carriage belonging to the King, drawn by eight splendid dapple-grey horses ; and at the appointed hour we all three got into it. The near-side leader and the third horse on the same side were led by grooms ; there were no postillions, but the whole team was driven by the King's coachman, holding his hat under his arm. Five carriages of my own followed, occupied by the gentlemen of my suite ; behind them came Maulevrier's carriages (he had only two), and then about twenty belonging to noblemen of the Court, who, thanks to the kind offices of the Duke de Liria and Sartine, had sent them to do me honour ; they were occupied by gentlemen belonging to their households. When we arrived in the Palace square I really fancied myself at the Tuileries ; the regiments of Spanish, French, Swiss, and Walloon Guards were drawn up under arms, their colours flying, drums beating, and the officers saluting with their spontoons. All the windows and shops along our route were decorated and crowded with people ; there was general rejoicing, and we heard nothing but blessings on all sides.

Descending from our carriage we were met by the Duke de Liria, the Prince de Chalais, and Valouse, First Equerry,

who said they came as Frenchmen to perform that duty. Caylus ought to have made a fourth, but he was not there. We were conducted between lines of halberdiers to the antechamber adjoining the audience-room, which was crowded with Grandees and other persons of distinction ; it reminded me of our own Court, but the crowd was more select. In about a quarter of an hour the door of the audience-room was opened to let the Grandees enter, after which it was closed again. I must here confess that the impression made on me by the King of Spain at my previous audiences was so far from imposing that I had hardly given a thought to what I was to say to him. Presently I was called, and all the persons of quality in the antechamber at once entered the audience-room before me, Don Gaspard Giron and the Introducer of Ambassadors remaining behind to escort Maulevrier and myself. As I approached the door La Roche came up to me and whispered that the King begged me not to be surprised if he removed his hat only at my first and last bows, not at the second ; he said he would do more for a French Ambassador than for any one else, but that was an immemorial custom which he was bound to respect. I asked La Roche to convey to the King my respectful thanks for this very kind and thoughtful message. As I passed through the door Maulevrier and our two introducers fell behind, and my attention was so much taken up by my speech and the imposing spectacle before me that I had no time to see what they did afterwards.

Half-way up the side facing me as I entered the vast hall was a canopy with no platform, under which the King was standing ; the wall opposite to him and that at the upper end of the room were lined by Grandees of Spain ; those at the lower end were crowded by persons of quality in several ranks. The King and Grandees wore their hats but no one else. I paused for a moment at the door to familiarise myself with this majestic spectacle ; there was a profound stillness, and not a movement was perceptible. Then I advanced slowly for a few paces, stopped, and made a low bow, which the King instantly acknowledged by taking off his hat, lowering it as far as his hip. Having covered half the distance which separated me from the King, I made my second bow, casting a glance as I did so over the Grandees on my right, who all took their hats off, but not so low as on the first occasion ; the King, as he had warned me,

remained motionless. I again advanced slowly, and when pretty near the King, made a third bow, whereupon he again took off his hat. Then I began my address, putting on my hat after the first few words.

After dilating on the advantages of closer union between the two nations, and the general rejoicing over my mission which I had noticed during my journey on both sides of the frontier, I proceeded to mention the personal attachment of our King for the King his uncle, and his desire to do all in his power to support his interests and his dignity ; he asked for the hand of the Infanta, I said, in order to draw still closer the ties of blood and common interests which already linked the two Crowns together, and in order to show his affection by doing his best to render the Infanta perfectly happy. Then I passed on to the gratitude felt by the Duke of Orleans for the honour His Catholic Majesty had done him in selecting Mademoiselle de Montpensier for the Prince of the Asturias. His Royal Highness, I said, was deeply touched by this mark of kindness on the part of His Majesty, for whose person he felt the most profound respect ; he would, in his position as Regent of France, do all in his power to promote union between the two branches of the Royal Family, and watch over the interests and dignity of His Catholic Majesty with as much zeal and attachment as those of France itself. I wound up by saying how highly I appreciated the honour of appearing before His Catholic Majesty as the Ambassador selected by my Sovereign to put the finishing touch to so desirable a work ; the keen gratification I felt in doing so, I added, was not merely that shared by every Frenchman and Spaniard ; it was also personal, for I had never been able to forget what His Catholic Majesty was by birth, and consequently had always regarded him with the most profound respect and devotion.

I have said that my first sight of the King of Spain startled me, and that my former audiences had not produced a very favourable impression on my mind. I must now confess that his reply to my address astonished me so much that I hardly knew where I was. He took up every point in succession, speaking with such grace, such an admirable choice of words and expressions, and at the same time with such an air of dignity and majesty, that I really thought I was listening to the late King, who was unsurpassed in the

art of making speeches of this sort. While not abating one jot of his claim to equality, Philip V contrived to show a certain deference for the King, his nephew, as the Head of his House, at the same time the most tender natural affection for the child of a brother whom he had passionately loved, and whose loss he still mourned. Without forgetting for a moment that he was King of Spain, he let it be seen that he was a Frenchman at heart, and that his joy at the projected marriage was prompted less by the interests of his kingdom than by the prospect of closer union between the branches of the Royal Family.

When he passed on to the marriage of the Prince of the Asturias it seemed as though he had suddenly ascended a lofty throne ; he spoke kindly but gravely, letting it be seen, though without saying so, that he considered himself to be conferring a favour on the Duke of Orleans, such as could hardly have been expected from him, in consenting to overlook all that was past. He spoke with admirable tact and delicacy, never hesitating, never pausing for a word, saying nothing that could possibly give offence ; yet contriving to convey unmistakeably his sense of superiority over the Duke of Orleans and his consciousness that he had much to forgive. What I admired more than anything was the hardly perceptible, but very effective, change which came over his countenance and voice when he passed from the subject of one marriage to the other. While replying on the first his face and all his bearing revealed his tender regard for the King's person, his love for his native country, and his joy at seeing its throne assured to his daughter ; when he turned to the second, he assumed an air of greater majesty and dignity ; he spoke like a Prince capable of controlling himself, able and willing to do a thing contrary to his personal feelings, yet quite conscious of the weight and consequence of the favours which he condescends to grant. I shall always regret that I was unable to take down this remarkable speech on the spot, and that I am consequently reduced to giving this very inadequate notion of its surprising ability.

When the King had finished I thought it right to say something complimentary, and, as the particular friend and servant of the Duke of Orleans, again to express his thanks. Without reply to these remarks, the King of Spain did me the honour of saying some very polite things about the plea-

sure it had given him to see me selected for a mission so agreeable to himself. Then, taking off my hat, I presented the French officers of my suite to him, and, after again honouring me with a few kind words, he left the room. I was immediately surrounded by all the most distinguished persons present, who were very civil and complimentary; after which most of the Grandees and persons of quality went off to the Queen's apartments, only a few remaining to keep me company till all was ready for my audience with her. I was conducted to the antechamber, where I had to wait a short time.

I must here remark that Don Gaspard Giron accompanied me only as far as the door leading out of the King's apartments, where he handed over his functions to one of the Queen's Major-domos. I had happened to hear beforehand that the Major-domo on duty for the week was Magny, and that consequently it would be his duty to introduce me; I spoke to Grimaldo about it, and asked that some other person should be appointed to perform that function. Not only did I obtain this favour, but Magny's name was struck off the list of those to accompany the Queen to Lerma; moreover, he was forbidden to appear in any place where I was, even at the palace; Grimaldo told me this himself. I do not know whether the other Frenchmen who had taken refuge in Spain in consequence of Cellamare's conspiracy and the Breton revolt had received a similar prohibition, or whether they took the hint; but they were careful to avoid meeting me or any member of my staff.

Presently the door was opened, and we were called in. The Queen's audience-chamber ran parallel to the gallery through which their Catholic Majesties had conducted me to see the Infants on the day following my arrival; it was separated from this gallery by open arches, and, as it derived all its light through these arches, it was rather dark. At the far end of the room the Queen was seated on a sort of throne, a very wide arm-chair, much ornamented; her feet rested on a magnificent footstool, very high and wide, which, as I perceived when she rose to go, concealed several low steps. Along the wall were stationed the Grandees, wearing their hats; opposite them, on the side of the arches, were their wives and other ladies of distinction, sitting on handsome velvet footstools, richly adorned with gold. After a moment's pause I advanced, making three low bows as at the

first audience; at the second all the Grandees took their hats off, the ladies on the other side also bowing; the Queen did not move till I made my third bow, to which she replied by a marked inclination of her body. My speech was much the same as that which I had made to the King, with such omissions and additions as circumstances required.

Her Majesty was modestly dressed, but brilliant with jewels; she bore herself with a grace and dignity becoming a great Queen. She was so overcome with joy that, as she told me more than once afterwards, she was quite embarrassed; and indeed her emotion was plainly visible. Nevertheless, she replied in very well-chosen terms, dilating on the common interests of the two branches of the Royal House and of the two nations; on her affectionate interest in our King and her consequent pleasure at seeing him affianced to the Infanta; on her friendly feeling towards the Duke of Orleans, and her desire to make his daughter happy in Spain; winding up with a few kind words to myself.

If this had been my first audience I should have been charmed with the Queen's reply, it was so well composed and delivered with such graceful dignity; but it must be confessed that, with all her ability and charming elocution, she failed to reach the same level as the King. When she had finished I bowed profoundly, and retired as fast as good manners would permit to the lowest of the footstools where the wives of the Grandees were sitting. Then I had to return, pausing at each footstool in succession, bending my knee slightly, and saying to each lady: "A los pies á Vuestra Excelencia," which means: "I place myself at your Excellency's feet"; to which she replied by a smile and a bow. It is necessary to be quick over this ceremony, to get through it while the Queen rises, descends from her throne by the steps concealed in her footstool, and reaches the door, which is at no great distance; for, as she leaves the room, it is the custom to kiss her hand and thank her in a few words. I had not reached the last of the ladies when I saw that the Queen was already at the door; she had treated me with so much kindness and familiarity at my former interviews that I thought I might venture on a slight liberty, so I ran after her, calling out that Her Majesty was in a great hurry; she stopped and turned round, whereupon I said that I did not wish to miss the precious favour reserved for me. She laughed and extended her ungloved hand; I sank on one

knee and kissed it; she said a few obliging words, to which I replied, and my audience was over.

After a short time spent in exchanging compliments and congratulations with the crowd of ladies and noblemen, I proceeded to the apartments of the Prince of the Asturias. My interview with him was not so much a ceremonial audience as a conversation, in the course of which he omitted nothing that was proper for him to say, and showed no shyness or embarrassment. Then the Introducer of Ambassadors took me to the rooms of the Infants and the Infanta; the youngest Infant was asleep, and so, in accordance with Grimaldo's promise, was the Infanta. I left the palace with the same honours as I had received on arriving, the troops having been kept in the square for that purpose. When I arrived at my house I found Don Gaspard Giron awaiting me with a numerous and illustrious company, and a magnificent dinner was prepared for us.

I was informed that Maulevrier had omitted to put on his hat at the audiences; I had not noticed it myself because he had been at some distance behind me, and the thing seemed so strange that I asked the Duke de Liria and others whether it was true. They said Maulevrier had not made the slightest attempt to put his hat on, and that his conduct had caused general surprise. I spoke to him about it afterwards, as politely as possible; he replied curtly that he was sorry, but it had not occurred to him that he ought to put his hat on; he would make amends for his blunder on the next occasion. This was only a silly mistake on his part; but, as we shall see directly, he had a trap ready for me which he had deliberately prepared.

The deed containing the preliminary articles had been signed in duplicate, one copy in Spanish, the other in French, and I concluded that it would be the same with the marriage-contract itself, which was to be signed that afternoon. There was nothing in my instructions about it, nor had Cardinal Dubois said anything. I had mentioned the matter to Maulevrier, and he seemed to take it for granted that the marriage-contract would be in duplicate. I arranged with him that he should bring with him to the ceremony of signing copies of the contract; and that while the contract was being read out we should check it by our copies, he taking the one in Spanish, as I did not understand that language. Before going to the audience in the morning I reminded him about

it; he said the copies were not ready, but would be so by dinner-time. When we returned he would not come in to dinner at my house, but promised to send me the French copy. Dinner lasted a long time; during its progress I sent twice to his house. The answer was that he would bring the copy himself; at last, when it was close on the time for me to start, I despatched a man on horseback to Maulevrier's house; he sent back word that I had better go without him and he would meet me at the palace. I thought that a rather singular reply, considering the importance of the ceremony; certainly the absence of his two carriages and his poor retinue of five or six men in livery would not greatly diminish the lustre of my train; still, I resented his conduct, though I would not show it.

As I have already said, Dubois had spitefully ordered me to take precedence of the Nuncio and the Major-domo at the ceremony; I had therefore been particularly careful to show them the utmost respect and civility whenever I met them, so that they might have no suspicion that I intended to precede them, though I hoped to be able to do so by a manœuvre, for I knew that to claim precedence over them openly would be a pretension which I could not sustain for a moment. The Major-domo's place at the ceremony was behind the King's arm-chair, a little to the right, so as to leave room for the Captain of the Guard; that of the Nuncio was on the King's right, close to the arm of his chair. I could not take that place without dislodging him altogether from the King's neighbourhood, which he would certainly not have allowed. I hoped, however, to sidle in to the front of the arm of the King's chair, as if trespassing slightly on both places in order to get nearer the King, under cover of ignorant simplicity and curiosity, as of a courtier anxious to talk to the King until the last possible moment. I managed, as will be seen, to carry it off most successfully, though no doubt people must have thought me a simpleton, ignorant of good manners. Maulevrier was an inconvenience, for he ought by rights to have been at my side; I did not think it necessary, however, to take him into my confidence, but let him shift for himself; all I cared about was to extricate myself from the dilemma in which the honest Dubois had placed me, in hopes of effecting my ruin in one way or the other.

At the appointed hour I started with Don Gaspard Giron in the same carriage which had been sent for me in the morn-

ing, and with the same escort; the streets were again filled with shouting crowds. I found all the most distinguished persons in Madrid assembled at the palace; every Grandee had been invited, besides the Nuncio, the Archbishop of Toledo, the Grand Inquisitor, the Secretaries of State, and Father d'Aubenton. The room adjoining the saloon in which the ceremony was to take place was crammed so that one could hardly move; having my own designs, however, I managed by degrees to get through the crowd, conversing to right and left as I did so, till I stationed myself close to the door by which the King was to enter. We had to wait quite three quarters of an hour, and in my uneasiness about my place and about the second copy of the contract, the time passed very slowly. At last the door was thrown open, and the King and Queen appeared, followed by the Infanta and the Infants. I began talking to the King at once, and walked by his side, talking the whole time, till we reached the appointed place, where I instantly took up the position I had marked out for myself.

A long table had been placed across the Hall of the Grandees, along which were ranged six arm-chairs touching each other; the one on the right, nearest the door by which we entered, was for the King; next to him was the Queen; then the Infanta, the Prince of the Asturias, Don Ferdinand, and Don Carlos. The Nuncio and the Major-domo, who entered after the youngest Infant, seemed a good deal surprised at finding me at the King's right hand; I heard them say "Signor," and "Señor," several times, for they spoke hardly any French; I bowed smilingly to both, as though I were so exhilarated by the joy of the occasion that I could think of nothing else, and immediately began talking to the King again, with a sort of enthusiastic liberty; at last they grew tired of calling to a man whose mind was apparently so carried away by his feelings that he understood neither what they meant nor the significance of the place he had taken. It was then that I saw Maulevrier for the first time since we parted before dinner; he tried to stuff himself between the Nuncio and myself; but the Nuncio, with a slight bow, held his ground. I dared not try to make room for Maulevrier, for that would have shown those two gentlemen that my conduct in placing myself where I was had more method about it than they suspected, and the Nuncio would most certainly have protested.

When everybody was in his place and the occupants of the six arm-chairs had taken their seats, Don Joseph Rodrigo was ordered to read out the marriage-contract. As he began I turned to Maulevrier as well as I could and asked whether he had the French and Spanish copies; he said they were not quite ready when he had left his house, but he expected them directly. "Time enough!" I said; and immediately began talking to the King again, to keep my two neighbours quiet. The reading took a long time; at a loss for further topics of conversation, I asked the King to grant me a private audience next day, to which he assented very graciously, and this helped me to keep on talking a little longer. The Queen was so much bored by the reading that she asked if it would last much longer; she seemed fully to expect the reading of a French deed afterwards, so I said we might dispense with the preamble, which contained nothing of importance. When the reading of the Spanish deeds was at an end Don Joseph Rodrigo came up to the end of the table to present the pen to the King; I submitted, in a low respectful voice, that I thought there was also a duplicate deed in French. Don Rodrigo, to whom the King repeated my remark in Spanish, said he thought not; at any rate, he said, he had not got it. Maulevrier, who up to that point had kept silence, said he would go and fetch it, and immediately went out. After a pause the King of Spain remarked to me that apparently the French deed was not essential, as it had not been brought. For all reply, I suggested that Grimaldo should be called up, to which the King assented.

Grimaldo, on being questioned, said a French deed was unnecessary; to which I objected that the preliminary articles had been signed in duplicate. He said that was a different matter; at least, that is all of his reply which the King of Spain, who was good enough to act as interpreter, repeated to me. I replied very modestly that I thought the dignity of the two Crowns required that each should have a deed in its own language; and at this moment Maulevrier came back to the place he had formerly occupied. Grimaldo said, very politely, that he did not see how a dispute could arise on that point, for he had seen a letter from Cardinal Dubois to Maulevrier in which it was expressly stated that two deeds were not necessary. As may be supposed, I was very much surprised at this; I turned and

looked at Maulevrier, who said in a very embarrassed manner that there was something of the sort in Cardinal Dubois' letter. I made up my mind at once what to do; turning to the King and Queen, I said I placed myself entirely at their command; and if, on further consideration, a French deed should be thought necessary, I trusted their Catholic Majesties would not object to signing it privately. I seasoned my remarks with such brief expressions of respect and mutual confidence as the joyful occasion suggested; at the same time, to show my zeal, I put out my hand as if to bring the deed nearer to the King—without actually touching it, however, for that would have been to infringe the privileges of the Secretary of State, Don Rodrigo.

I could see that the King and Queen were much pleased by this little demonstration. Don Rodrigo then presented the contract and pen to the King, who signed; the Queen followed his example, and then placed the deed before the Infanta, holding her hand and guiding the pen while she signed, which she did very prettily. The Prince of the Asturias and his brothers having affixed their signatures, Don Rodrigo conducted Maulevrier and myself to a small table; the King and Queen followed us, and commanded us to sign the contract in their presence, which we did; and I thanked them for the honour they had done us. There was an immediate outburst of joyful congratulations from all the bystanders, who were on a sufficiently familiar footing with their Catholic Majesties; and the good behaviour of the Infanta while kept for so long in one place, and her cleverness in writing her name, were not forgotten. I accompanied the King and Queen to the door of the Hall of Mirrors, making a point of showing the utmost deference to the Major-domo and Nuncio, and yielding precedence to them whenever possible, in order to prevent them thinking that I had designedly placed myself above them at the ceremony.

After receiving the compliments and congratulations of the distinguished crowd which flocked round me directly their Majesties had left the room, I asked Maulevrier to accompany me to Grimaldo's office, in order to clear up the business of the French deed. I reproached him mildly for not having informed me about Cardinal Dubois' letter, to which he merely replied, very coldly, that he would let me see it. Grimaldo received me with great politeness; and informed me that, while he was quite certain of what he had

said about Dubois' letter, he had just been ordered by the King to say that if I pressed the point he was quite willing to sign a duplicate deed in French.

I thanked him most sincerely; but I was unwilling to let him, and still more to let the King, see that there was any want of cordiality between myself and Maulevrier, who indeed stood self-condemned from the silence and embarrassment of his demeanour. I was careful also to report this altercation to Cardinal Dubois only, making no mention of it to the Duke of Orleans, nor in my despatch to the King, which would have to be read in the Council of Regency; and in my letter to the Cardinal I attributed Maulevrier's conduct merely to forgetfulness on his part. I continued to treat him with the politeness and respect due to the character of Ambassador which I had conferred upon him; he often came to dine with me, even without an invitation, and nobody could have perceived that I was not pleased with him. It was not that I did not feel all the perfidy of his conduct; but it would have been unbecoming in a foreign country to quarrel openly with a colleague whom I must necessarily consult on business matters, especially with one so inferior to me in position, for whom, to say the truth, I had a hearty contempt. Besides, I did not feel at all sure that this piece of rascality was all his own; I thought it quite possible that it originated with Cardinal Dubois. These considerations made me resolve to treat him as if nothing had happened; I even went so far as to turn the conversation and refuse to answer when, as often happened, noblemen about the Court spoke freely about him in my presence; for he was universally hated at Madrid, by the lower orders as much as at Court. All the same, I was on my guard against him as an impudent rogue, and was not sorry to let him see it from time to time.

To finish up this matter—a courier arrived from Burgos bringing a better account of my eldest son. On the way he met the King and Queen, who had started for Lerma on the previous day; recognising my livery, they called him up to their carriage and asked for news of my son, sending me a message to say how glad they were to hear that he was better. I wrote to Grimaldo asking him to thank their Majesties for this mark of their kindness; at the same time I informed him that Maulevrier had shown me Cardinal Dubois' letter, and that I was perfectly satisfied.

CHAPTER XXI

1721

I transgress the etiquette of the Spanish Court—The marvellous illuminations—My astonishment and admiration thereat give great satisfaction—The ball in the Hall of the Grandees—The Princess de Robecque—My audience with the King and Queen—The Infanta's religious education—The Queen's invitation—I consult Grimaldo—I announce Mademoiselle de Montpensier's departure from France—The King and Queen receive me in audience while in bed—Departure of the King and Queen for Lerma—I send off my despatches by a young officer with certain requests anent him to Dubois—Prince de Rohan—My visits—Prince d'Aubenton—His request and my reply—My journey to Lerma—I stay at the Escurial *en route*—I am seized with small-pox—The King of Spain's physician attends me.

It will be remembered that, in my anxiety to keep the King in conversation as a pretext for remaining in the place I had taken above the Nuncio, and really not knowing what more to say to him, I had asked him to grant me an audience for the following day. Now a direct request like that is quite contrary to the etiquette of the Spanish Court; no one, however distinguished, ever asks for an audience except through the proper Minister; and he notifies the hour appointed if the King grants the request, which is seldom refused, never to the Minister of a foreign Power. About an hour and a half after I returned to my house after the ceremony of signing the contract I was surprised at receiving a letter from Grimaldo asking me whether, as I had asked the King in person for an audience, I had anything private to say to him which I did not wish the Queen to hear. I wrote back at once to say that, finding an opportunity to make my request I had availed myself of it without consideration; that if I had not mentioned the Queen it was simply because I thought her presence at a private audience was a matter of course; I had nothing whatever to say which did not apply equally to her, as I had only to return thanks to the King for all his kindness; and I should be much disappointed if she were not present at my audience.

As I was writing this letter Don Gaspard Giron came in

to invite me to see the illuminations in the Place Major; so I finished it hastily, and we got into a carriage, followed by others containing the principal members of my suite. We were driven by a roundabout route, so that we should not see the glare of the illuminations prematurely; at last we arrived at the back of a house which fronts the square, the same which the King and Queen use when they wish to see any festivity there. We saw no light whatever when we got out of the carriages, nor when we mounted the staircase; every opening had been carefully closed; but when we were shown into a room looking on to the square we were fairly dazzled; the sight from the balcony was so astonishing that for some minutes I was speechless.

The Place Major is very much vaster than any square I have seen at Paris or elsewhere; the houses surrounding it are all exactly alike, five stories high, with the same number of windows; and each window has an iron balcony. In every balcony two huge torches of white wax were placed, and it is astonishing what a splendid effect was produced; the light given by the torches was such that the smallest print could be read easily in any part of the square. As soon as I appeared on the balcony the people crowded in front of the house shouting, "Señor, tauro! tauro!" They wanted me to obtain permission for a bull-fight; for this amusement, of which they are passionately fond, had been stopped by the King some years before, from conscientious scruples. I contented myself next day with reporting these cries to him, without making any request on the subject. Don Gaspard Giron and the other Spaniards present were delighted to hear me express such astonishment and admiration at the sight of the illuminations, the more so because they are not accustomed to hear anything in their country admired by French people; they talked of it wherever they went, and many noblemen mentioned it to me afterwards with great satisfaction.

On returning to my house I had scarcely time to have supper before I had to go back to the palace for a ball which the King was giving in the Hall of the Grandees. This vast saloon was magnificently adorned and lighted; at the end opposite the entrance were six arm-chairs for the King, Queen, and Royal Family, in the same order as at the ceremony of the afternoon; behind them were *tabourets* for the holders of the six principal court offices; and to one side

of the arm-chairs, but a little to the rear of them, were two folding-chairs covered with crimson velvet and gold fringes. To these Don Gaspard Giron conducted Maulevrier and myself, an unprecedented honour; as there was no one in front of us we had a fine view of the dancing and the superb sight. There was a profusion of jewels; and I must admit that no ball I ever saw in France came near this one in splendour. I thought it rather strange to see three Bishops there in rochet and hood; the equipment of the Queen's *camerara-major* also struck me as rather funny for a ball; she carried a very long rosary, and in the intervals of conversation about the dancing and so on she was muttering paternosters the whole time, dropping a bead at each; this went on throughout the ball. What I did not like was that there was not a single seat in the room except those I have specified, so that the dancers had to stand the whole time. In an adjoining room were refreshments of all kinds and wine in profusion; any one could go in there during the confusion of the country-dances and bring out refreshments to the ladies.

The King and Queen opened the ball, dancing together. It came as another surprise to me to watch him; he was very fond of dancing, and while engaged in it he became quite another man; his back and knees grew straight; all his movements were accurate and, I may honestly say, graceful. The Queen afterwards danced with the Prince of the Asturias; both had extremely good figures, and I have never seen a couple dance better, very few who came anywhere near them; the Queen in particular excelled any one I ever saw in France. The two younger Infants also danced very prettily for their age.

In Spain both men and ladies continue to dance and to wear bright colours up to the age of sixty or more, without any one thinking it ridiculous; I saw several instances of this. The youngest Infant led out the Princess de Robecque, who was nearly fifty, and looked her age. She was a Frenchwoman by birth, daughter of the Count de Solre of the house of Croï. Her mother, who was a Bournonville, first-cousin to the Maréchale de Noailles, being on bad terms with her husband, had brought her to Spain, where she married the Prince de Robecque, whom Philip V, to please Madame des Ursins, had created Grandee of Spain and Knight of the Golden Fleece. She was now a widow, and Lady of the

Palace to the Queen, with whom she and her mother were supposed to be great favourites. I had known them both well before they went to Spain, and one of my first visits was to them; in former days I had often danced with Madame de Robecque, a fact which she apparently communicated to the Queen.

At the close of her dance with the Infant she walked up the whole length of the room, made a ceremonious bow to their Majesties, and then came up to me in my recess to ask me to dance with her, making me a laughing curtsey. I said she was making game of me, and a laughing dispute arose between us; at last she went to the Queen, who called me to her and said she and the King wished me to dance. In vain I pleaded my age, my dignified functions, the number of years since I had given up dancing; they said they were sure I danced very well, begged me to try, and at last commanded me to do so in such a way that I could not refuse; so I had to perform to the best of my ability.

An hour after the opening of the ball the Infanta was taken away to bed. The minuets were often varied by country-dances; the King seldom took part in these, but the Queen danced in them all, always with the Prince of the Asturias. In these one dances with all the ladies in succession, coming back to one's own partner at the end, so that the Queen danced with everybody. I shirked as many of the country-dances as possible, but that was not very many; as may be supposed, I did not know the figures at all. When the ball was at an end the Marquis de Villagarcias, a most polite and pleasant person who has since become Viceroy of Peru, took me into the refreshment-room, and would not let me go till I had swallowed a glass of excellent wine, because I was in a violent perspiration from dancing so much in a very heavy coat. The King and Queen, and the Prince of the Asturias, were in great force at the ball, and seemed to enjoy it immensely. That evening and the next I caused my house to be illuminated within and without, not having had time to give any sort of festivity in the midst of so many ceremonies coming one on the top of the other.

Next morning, the 26th of November, I went to the palace for the audience which I had requested. As soon as I saw their Majesties I perceived that Grimaldo had rendered me a service in writing his letter of the previous

day, for the Queen advanced to meet me, saying in quite a familiar way: "Now, sir, no ceremony; you have something to say to the King in private, so I will go away to the window and leave you alone!" I made the same reply as in my letter to Grimaldo, adding that it was so true that I had nothing private to say, that if I had had the disappointment of not finding Her Majesty there, I should have been obliged to demand a separate audience of her, to say the same things over again. "No, no!" she cried with some vivacity, "I will leave you with the King and come back when you have finished!" And with these words she went off to a window on the other side of the room, which she seemed to reach in two bounds, although it was at a considerable distance. I followed her, protesting that I would not open my mouth till she returned to the King, who all this time was standing motionless; at last she let herself be persuaded, and came back. She would have heard every word I said from the King, but she would never have forgiven me if she had not been present.

I then proceeded to thank their Majesties for all their kindness on the preceding day. I sum up my speech in this way, but of course I did not express myself in that bald fashion; I did not forget to mention the pretty behaviour of the Infanta, the astonishing beauty of the illuminations, the magnificence of the ball, or the graceful dancing of their Majesties, the Prince of the Asturias, and the Infanta; I dwelt a good deal on these topics because I saw it pleased their Majesties. Indeed, when I had finished the Queen began to speak in high praise of the King, calling upon me to admire even his beauty; at which he merely smiled. He asked me whether I would not send off a courier; to which I replied, "Certainly; for a deed signed by their own hands was a document too precious to be confided to the ordinary post." They seemed much pleased with this answer. Then I proceeded to carry out the clause which I had caused to be inserted in my instructions regarding Don Patricio Laullez; I had previously mentioned this matter to Grimaldo, and he had spoken to their Majesties about it. I was really anxious to obtain some favour for this Ambassador in return for his services to me, and urged my request with all the eloquence at my command. The King seemed to listen with satis-

faction, but the Queen showed much more interest; she put in a word or two, looking at the King in a manner which showed how strongly she wished him to confer some honour on Laullez.

The King broke off this topic rather abruptly by telling me that he had always put great confidence in the Jesuits, and he wished the Infanta to be placed in charge of a Jesuit for instruction in religious matters; he begged me to ask this of the Duke of Orleans as a personal favour to himself. I said I would carry out his commands with the utmost respect and exactness, and I had no doubt the Duke of Orleans would be delighted to comply with his wishes. He seemed to attach great importance to this matter, and prolonged the conversation more than was necessary, looking hard at me as if to find out what my own opinion was. The Queen did not appear much interested; contrary to her usual custom, she hardly said a word in support of the King, while he urged his point zealously.

After this my audience became a conversation. Their Majesties took me to a window to show me the fine view of the Mançanarez, with the Casa del Campo, and the open country beyond. A little talk on indifferent subjects led up to the customs of the Spanish Court, and I said what great satisfaction it gave me to be allowed the honour of approaching them on all proper occasions. Thereupon the Queen looked at the King and said, in a very gracious way, that for me there must be no question of regular hours or etiquette; I might come and see them at any time, without having anything particular to communicate; and it would be a real pleasure to them if I would avail myself freely of this permission. I did not fail to thank her suitably for a favour so little expected and so entirely unprecedented; after which I said that the Marquis de Grimaldo had probably informed them that the Count de Céreste hoped to have the honour of delivering a letter to His Majesty from his brother the Marquis de Brancas. They said he should be called in immediately; and my audience was then brought to a close; it had lasted nearly an hour.

As I was taking leave, the Queen again told me that I was to come and see them whenever I pleased, and not to be afraid of using this privilege too freely, and she said it in a perfectly natural and very gracious way; nevertheless, I thought it would be wise to tell Grimaldo and ask his

advice. It occurred to me that although their Majesties, in order to mark their joy at the auspicious occasion, had graciously offered me a favour never granted to any one, they might very possibly find it tiresome if I availed myself of the privilege, however discreetly ; moreover, I was afraid lest Grimaldo should take umbrage at it, and without his assistance I could do nothing of importance, whatever private favours I might receive. Accordingly I went straight down to his office, told him what Her Majesty had said, and asked him frankly what he thought I had better do about it.

After thanking me warmly for my confidence in him, he said that, since I wished him to speak candidly, he advised me to regard the Queen's invitation as a singular kindness on her part, but not to avail myself of it ; a private interview, he said, would be quite useless for any purposes of business, and would only embarrass their Majesties, for they would certainly not give me an answer till they had talked the subject over between themselves ; moreover, he was sure they would really be better pleased to see me at the regular hours, or at a special audience if I thought proper to ask for one. He wound up by offering his services with their Majesties at any time, either to take a direct message, or to say anything which I might wish to convey to them indirectly, as if coming from himself. I thanked him cordially for his kind offers, assuring him that I would follow his advice implicitly, which I did, and found no occasion to regret it. This placed me on a footing of confidence and friendship with him which was of the greatest possible advantage to me in many ways.

In the afternoon of the same day the King and Queen went in ceremony to the church of Our Lady of Atocha, to return thanks for the happy conclusion of the arrangements for the marriages. This church stands on the outskirts of the town, adjoining the park of Buen-Retiro ; it is a large building, but not very handsome for a Spanish church. I thought Maulevrier and I ought to attend the thanksgiving service, but he considered it advisable to consult the Marquis de Montalegre, who was better acquainted than anybody with the customs and ceremonies of the Spanish Court, and for once he was right ; Montalegre thought there might be inconveniences, and advised us not to attend. I never heard his reasons for thinking so ;

probably there might have been some difficulty about our places at the ceremony.

Next day, Thursday, November 27th, the King and Queen were to start for Lerma. Very early in the morning Maulevrier came to my house with a despatch which had just arrived for him, announcing the departure of Mademoiselle de Montpensier on the 18th, and the day on which she would reach the frontier. It could not have arrived more seasonably, for every time the King and Queen had seen me they had spoken very impatiently, and even angrily, about the delay in the Princess's departure, and my assurances that it was unavoidable had produced no effect whatever. This despatch was in duplicate; Cardinal Dubois had calculated that I should not arrive at Madrid before the 28th, and the courier had orders to deliver the other copy to me when he caught me up on the road. A separate despatch to Maulevrier announced the satisfactory settlement of another question, which had aroused the resentment of the King of Spain: the Emperor had arrogated to himself the right of creating Grandees of Spain, and he now formally abandoned it.

We thought it right, as their Catholic Majesties had been waiting so impatiently to hear of Mademoiselle de Montpensier's departure, to lose no time in carrying the news to them; and we set off for the palace at once. I wanted to see Grimaldo first, for it was a very early hour to seek an audience of the King; but Maulevrier was of opinion that it would be better to go straight to the royal apartments, and, if the King and Queen were not yet visible, we could go down to Grimaldo's office and wait there. I knew Grimaldo would not take offence, and besides, I could tell him that in not going to him first I had yielded to the advice of Maulevrier, who ought to know the ways of the Court better than I did, so I gave way; and we went straight to the door of the Hall of Mirrors. The palace was a desert at that hour, and we had to scratch very noisily at the door before any one came; at last a confidential valet, a Frenchman, appeared, and told us that their Majesties were still in bed. We had expected as much; but we asked him to let them know that we wished to have the honour of speaking to them. I must explain that, except a very few confidential officials of the Household, no one was ever allowed to see them in bed; and no one except Grimaldo ever came to

them in the morning on matters of business. However, the valet returned almost immediately, with a message to the effect that, although it was against all rule and custom for them to receive any one while they were in bed, their Majesties consented that we should be admitted.

We were conducted along the spacious Hall of Mirrors into a fine large room, and were then shown into a very small room indeed, deriving all its light through the door and from two little windows high up in the ceiling. There we saw a bed, not more than four and a half feet wide, hung with crimson damask and gold fringe, the curtains at the foot of the bed, and on the side where the King lay, were undrawn. The King was lying back on his pillows, wearing a short bed-mantle of white satin; on his left, the Queen, who also wore a mantle, was sitting up with a piece of needle-work in her hand; some balls of wool and papers were scattered about near her, both she and the King wore nightcaps. Maulevrier and I entered by ourselves, for the valet who introduced us did not pass the door. The King told us to cut short our bows, and, raising himself a little on his pillows, asked, rather impatiently, what had brought us. "Good news, Sire!" I said. "Mademoiselle de Montpensier left Paris on the 18th; the courier has just arrived, and we came at once to inform your Majesties!"

Their faces brightened at this announcement; they asked many questions about the Princess's journey, when she might be expected at the frontier, and so on. Then we told them all that our despatches contained about the honours paid to the Duke d'Ossuna and to Mademoiselle de Montpensier since the announcement of her approaching marriage, the ball given in her honour, and the universal joy of the public; also the Duke of Orleans' profound gratitude for the honour done to his daughter. Their Majesties asked us many questions, so that the conversation lasted quite an hour; they seemed much pleased at the unusual efforts to do them honour on this occasion, which we explained to them, as well as at the hearty rejoicing of the Court and public. I say "we" explained; but, as a matter of fact, Maulevrier, who did not understand the importance of the finer distinctions of ceremonial, hardly said a word.

At the close of the conversation Maulevrier announced that he had received, by the same courier, a despatch

relating to the creation of Grandees by the Emperor. At the mention of this the King looked so angry that I interposed hastily that His Majesty would be satisfied with the conclusion of the despatch; this seemed to appease him. Maulevrier then, to my great surprise, proceeded to read the despatch from one end to the other. It is true there was nothing in it which might not have been seen by anybody; still, it seemed to me a dangerous precedent, and a breach of trust, for an Ambassador to show the text of his despatches to the Sovereign to whom he is accredited, or to his Minister; I found out afterwards, however, that Maulevrier was in the habit of doing so. It was stated in the despatch that the Emperor had created the Grandees by the advice of Rialp. At this name the King looked at me with an air of vexation, saying, "That man is a Catalan!" I smiled, and said rather pointedly: "Sire, there is no more bitter enemy than a renegade; he is the worst of all." The Queen looked at me and began to laugh; I saw that she understood my remark to refer to the Frenchmen who had taken refuge in Spain on account of their share in the affairs of Brittany and Cellamare; and that indeed was exactly what I did mean.

At last their Majesties dismissed us, telling us that we had done quite rightly in hastening to inform them of Mademoiselle de Montpensier's departure, and they were glad we had not waited till they were up. We went down at once to Grimaldo's office and told him what we had just done; I did not forget to mention that it had been by Maulevrier's advice. He seemed to approve. After discussing the exchange of Princesses, and other subjects, which took nearly two hours, Maulevrier and I returned to my house for dinner. We had to return to the palace afterwards to see the King and Queen start. They both, but especially the Queen, told me several times that I must not delay my own departure for Lerma too long, to which I replied that they would find me there on their arrival. Then I went back to my house to write my despatches and send off my courier, who was also to take the copy of the marriage contract signed by the King and Queen. For this task I selected a young gentleman of good family but little fortune, a brave and efficient officer, who was serving as Lieutenant in the Marquis de Saint-Simon's regiment. I asked Cardinal Dubois to give him a captain's commission,

the cross of St. Louis, and a pension. I mention this because, as we shall see, these favours were granted in rather a funny way.

I received a letter from Cardinal Dubois, informing me that Prince de Rohan had been selected to carry out the exchange of Princesses. I had known that before I left Paris, and we had several interviews in consequence, to discuss our respective functions; but Cardinal Dubois seemed to think that his appointment would be a disagreeable surprise to me, and entered into a long apologetic explanation of his reasons for not entrusting the exchange to me. I could not help laughing a little at this letter. I did not care in the least who was appointed; my only object in wishing to be sent to Spain was to obtain a Grandeeship for my younger son, and thus found a second branch of my family; my appointment as Ambassador might naturally lead to this favour, but it made no difference whether I took charge of the exchange of Princesses or not. On former occasions two persons had been appointed; one as Ambassador, the other to receive the Princess at the frontier and escort her to our Court.

But, though I was not in the least jealous of Prince de Rohan, I saw that it would be necessary to guard against any encroachments on my dignity as Duke and Peer of France. The Marquis de Santa-Cruz, a Grandee of an illustrious family, was the person appointed by the Spanish Court to carry out the exchange of Princesses conjointly with Prince de Rohan; and the names of the negotiators, with their respective styles and titles, had to be inserted in the deed of exchange. I foresaw that the Breton nobleman would try to figure as a Prince; and to prevent it I had to arouse the susceptibility of his Spanish colleague. He did not much like Frenchmen, but I had taken pains to cultivate his acquaintance; moreover, I explained the matter to the Duke de Liria, who was a great friend of his. He saw at once how necessary it was to prevent any encroachment on the dignity of the Grandees, and undertook to speak to Santa-Cruz about it. I also spoke to him myself, and he promised me not to yield to the pretensions of Prince de Rohan; as we shall see, when the time came he kept his word with great firmness.

Although my time since my arrival at Madrid had been so fully occupied with ceremonial functions, I contrived to pay

more than eighty visits; and during the four days which elapsed between the departure of the Court and my own I paid a good many more. One of the objects I had proposed to myself was to make myself agreeable not only to their Catholic Majesties, but to the Court and to the Spanish people generally; and I think I may venture to say that I succeeded. This immense number of visits which I found time to pay did a good deal towards making me popular. The custom in Spain is for all persons of any distinction to call on the chief Ambassadors on their arrival; I mean the Nuncio and the Imperial, French, and English Ambassadors; and they are flattered if the Ambassador returns their visit promptly. Among such a number he selects the most distinguished, and calls on them at an hour when they are likely to be at home; as for the others, he pays his visits when they are taking their midday rest. They are not in the least offended at this. In this way one can get through a great number of visits in a day; and to expedite matters I drove through the streets at a trot, instead of at a foot's-pace as is customary; I explained why I did so, and nobody found fault. On ordinary occasions I followed the usual custom and made my horses walk.

As may be supposed, I did not omit to call on Father d'Aubenton. Cardinal Dubois had particularly enjoined me to do so; but I should have made a point of it in any case, for I knew his good offices with the King would be extremely useful, not only in public affairs, but for the attainment of the personal object which had led me to desire this embassy. He spoke very openly on this subject, assuring me of his willingness to help me, and his desire to please the Duke of Orleans and promote union between him and the King of Spain. The good Father proceeded to turn the occasion to profit on his own account. He said he felt drawn towards me, though we had never met, for he knew I had always been well disposed towards the Jesuits; he spoke of the Jesuit confessors I had had, and of Father Tellier's esteem for me, and then proceeded to tell me of the King of Spain's intention of speaking to me on the subject of placing the Infanta's education in the hands of a Jesuit. My reply was quite satisfactory to him; whereupon he began in a very hesitating manner to make another request, stammering and interrupting himself, as though unwilling to come to the point. He got no assistance from me, for

I saw what he was driving at; at last it came out—he told me that the King of Spain was very anxious that our King should take a Jesuit as his confessor, and asked me to write to the Duke of Orleans urging this request upon him. This proposal was made very artfully, with many insinuations of the help he could give me towards obtaining the rank of Grandee for my son; finally he asked me, with an air of confidence, what I thought about it myself.

I began by assuring him that all he had heard of my good-will towards the Jesuits was correct. I then proceeded to say that the questions of confessors to the King and the Infanta were quite distinct; it was only natural that the King of Spain's affection for his daughter should lead him to express his wish that her education should be entrusted to a Jesuit, and I felt sure that the Duke of Orleans would gladly gratify him in that matter; but for the King of Spain to interfere in the arrangements of our King's household was a different thing altogether, and I thought it would not be more favourably received in France than a similar request from our Court that the King of Spain should change his confessor would be in Spain. I begged his Reverence therefore to induce the King of Spain, in speaking to me, to confine himself to asking for a Jesuit for the Infanta, and not touch the other delicate subject, leaving it to the King, his nephew, and his advisers to select a confessor when the Abbé Fleury, through age or infirmity, should no longer be able to exercise that function. My reply could not have been pleasing to him; but the serenity of his countenance did not alter in the least; he even seemed to agree that there was some force in what I had said. He repeated his assurances that he would do his best to further my personal object, and we parted the best friends in the world. I did not fail to report this conversation in my despatches, and my reply was highly approved of.

I will omit several affairs of no great importance about which Cardinal Dubois wrote to me; the more readily because the illness which attacked me at this time prevented me from holding any communication with him. Nor will I say anything of the cruel financial embarrassments which he had designedly prepared for me, as he had shown by increasing my expenses tenfold. It will be remembered that I had declined to receive regular pay as Ambassador, merely stipulating that all my expenses incurred in the service

should be regularly and punctually repaid, so that I should not run short of money. This was promised, but from the very beginning Cardinal Dubois took good care that the promise should not be carried out, though lavish of assurances of his good-will; he had not forgiven me for obtaining the embassy without his knowledge and against his will, and he meant to take his revenge by ruining me. In the end he succeeded; but for the honour of France, as well as my own, I must say that he had not the pleasure of seeing me discredited in Spain; when I left that country I owed no man a halfpenny, nor did I diminish the splendour of my train in any way, except that when I went to Lerma I sent back to France nearly all the young officers whom the worthy ecclesiastic had forced me to take to Spain.

The Spanish Court, travelling with the swiftness of a tortoise, was not due at Lerma till the 11th of December. The town is situated in the pretty valley of the Arlanzon, and is overlooked by the castle, a magnificent structure built by the Cardinal-Duke of Lerma, Prime Minister to Philip III, who died in 1625. The castle commands a fine view of the valley, and of a vast forest of stunted evergreen oaks; at the back, and on a level with the first floor, is a natural terrace of level ground which, in a country where such things are appreciated, might be turned into a vast and beautiful garden. There is not room in the castle for more than the King's household and servants; the rest of the Court and Ambassadors have to be quartered in the surrounding villages. I chose the village of Villahalmanzo, where the priest's house was fitted up for me, chimneys being constructed expressly; and my staff was distributed among the other houses. We had not the least difficulty with the inhabitants; their dwellings were greatly improved by our alterations; we gave them presents when we left, and they parted from us with real regret and in some instances with tears. The cost of moving my household from Madrid was ruinous.

On my way to Lerma I spent three days at the Escurial, provided with letters, not only from the King and the Marquis de Grimaldo, but from the Nuncio, requesting the Prior to let me see anything I pleased in that vast and superb monastery; for I had been warned that without the Nuncio's recommendation I should find my other letters of little use. I will not undertake a description of the place, nor of the

artistic treasures which it contains; suffice it to say that a connoisseur might easily spend three months there without seeing the whole of the collection. The building is in the form of a gridiron, and everything it contains, down to the most petty utensil, is stamped with the same mark; this is in honour of St. Lawrence, on whose day [1] Philip II won the battle of St. Quentin. He watched the fight from a safe place on a height, and vowed to build this monastery if his troops were victorious; at the same time he asked his courtiers if that was the sort of thing which gave the Emperor, his father, such delight. His father, however, used to look at battles from a closer point of view. The Escurial is very badly designed for the accommodation of a Court; their Catholic Majesties inhabit the buildings which form the handle of the gridiron, and the Prior's quarters are far better than the King's.

I was received with much civility, and the Prior and another fat monk did the honours at supper; which was very good, though cooked after the Spanish fashion. After this first repast my own people prepared my meals; but the fat monk always contributed some dishes which it would have been impolite to refuse; he always ate with us, for he was told off to conduct us everywhere, and never left us for a moment. As we spoke no Spanish, and he did not understand French, we had to converse in very bad Latin. Next day he showed us the church, which is extremely magnificent, especially the high altar. There are glazed windows opening on to the sanctuary behind the seats of the celebrating priest and his assistants; these are the windows by which Philip II used to hear the sacred office, the little gallery to which they belong forms part of a suite of rooms which he caused to be built for himself, and in which he died. I wished to see them, but here I found even the Nuncio's letter of no avail; the monks absolutely refused me admission, declaring that nobody had been into the rooms since the death of Philip II. I said I knew that Philip V had entered them with his suite, and they admitted that it was so; but they said he had entered by force, threatening to break open the doors, and no other King had seen the rooms since Philip II. I did not understand this superstitious feeling, but I had to submit. Louville, who was with Philip V when he entered, told me that there

[1] August 10th, 1557.

were only five or six rooms, very small and dark, without tapestry or furniture when he saw them ; so I did not lose much.

As we descended to the Pantheon I noticed a door on the left, about half-way down the staircase. The fat monk told us that it led to the Putridero, and he opened it and took us in. This is the place where the bodies of royal personages are walled up till decay has done its work, when they are taken out and placed in another chamber. I have described this place elsewhere. The monk pointed out the spot in the wall where M. de Vendôme's body was immured ; he seemed to think that it was likely to remain there for ever. He then led us into an adjoining chamber fitted with shelves exactly like a library, only, instead of books, they were filled with coffins ranged close alongside each other, the head to the wall, and at the foot of each coffin, which is the only part visible, there is an inscription stating the name of the occupant. Although this place is so confined there is not the slightest smell ; we walked all round it reading the inscriptions and questioning the monk about them.

Presently we came to the coffin of the ill-fated Don Carlos ; turning to the monk, I said : " As for this one, we know what he died of, and why ! " Looking as black as thunder, he declared that Don Carlos had died a natural death, and began declaiming against the silly stories which had been set afloat on the subject. I said I admitted, at any rate, that he had not been put to death by opening his veins. This increased the irritation of the fat monk, who went on talking more furiously than ever. I interrupted him by telling him that the present King, shortly after his arrival in Spain, had caused this coffin to be opened, and I knew from a person who had been present on the occasion (Louville) that Don Carlos' head had been found between his legs ; showing that he had been beheaded by the order of his father, Philip II. " Well ! and what then ? " shouted the monk in a fury ; " apparently he richly deserved it, for Philip II had the Pope's sanction for what he did ! " and thereupon he began declaiming about Philip II's piety and justice, and the boundless power of the Pope, denouncing any one as a heretic who doubted that he might give any decisions, orders, or dispensations whatever.

Such is the fanaticism of countries where the Inquisition is in force, where knowledge is a crime, and ignorance and

stupidity virtues of the first order! I was not afraid of the Inquisition, for as an Ambassador I was safe from its clutches, but I did not care to have an angry scene with this fat-gutted monk. I merely laughed and made him a sign to say no more; at the same time making a warning gesture to my companions. He went on talking, however, for some time; at last he seemed to perceive that we were laughing at him, and continued his tour round the room, still fuming. Afterwards we went down to the Pantheon, where they did me the singular honour of lighting up the huge chandelier which hangs in the midst of the vault; the light was dazzling, the smallest print would have been legible in any part of the building, and we could see the finest details of the ornaments.

After a stay of three days we started again on our journey; and the fat monk, who had been very sulky since our visit to the Putridero, recovered his temper. We were not sorry to say good-bye to him, but very much so to leave the Escurial, for a stay of three months would not have exhausted our interest in the place.

At last, on the 9th of December, we arrived at our village of Villahalmanzo, where I found my eldest son, who had just arrived from Burgos convalescent. We had a very cheerful supper; and I looked forward to exploring the surrounding country next day. But during the night I was seized with a fever, which became rapidly worse; and by the third day it was evident that I had caught small-pox, which was very prevalent at that time. The King of Spain sent me his own physician as soon as he heard of my illness, with orders not to quit my side till I was completely cured. My attendants took the greatest care of me, and the disease ran its course without any unfavourable symptoms, but it was more than six weeks before I was allowed to see anybody from outside. My doctor gave me no medicine, except a few spoonfuls of an agreeable cordial when the eruption was at its height, and a refreshing drink made by cutting oranges in two, with their skins, and letting them simmer slowly before the fire. When I was almost well he bled and purged me once, after which I returned to my usual diet; but of course I was still shut up for fear of infection. I found this doctor a very agreeable companion; I shall have occasion to mention him again.

CHAPTER XXII

1722

My character sketch of the King and Queen of Spain—The King's scruples about his right to the Spanish throne—Alberoni's influence with the Queen and its results—The daily life in the Spanish Court—The King and Queen never apart—The Queen's plans for her sons—Her unpopularity in Spain—A shooting party—The game of Mall—My son's honours—Dubois' letters—Grimaldo's advice concerning them—The exchange of Princesses on the Isle of Pheasants—Rohan's extravagant claims—The order of the Golden Fleece—Cardinal Borgia's vanity—The King and Queen, with the Prince of the Asturias, pay a surprise visit to Mademoiselle de Montpensier.

I HAVE already described the personal appearance of the King and Queen, but perhaps a more detailed sketch of their characters and mode of life may not be out of place here. Philip V had not been endowed by nature with a superior understanding, and he was completely devoid of what people call imagination. Cold, taciturn, and melancholy, he cared for no amusement except shooting; he shunned society because he had no confidence in himself; all his tastes were those of a recluse, and he seldom came out of his shell; the misfortunes of others, as a rule, made little impression upon him. Nevertheless, he had a good deal of common sense, and was thoroughly straightforward; his general comprehension of things was fairly good; but when he had once adopted an opinion he was apt to cling to it with intense obstinacy, which it was almost impossible to overcome. In spite of this it was extremely easy to manage him and lead him by the nose.

He had very little sensibility. When he was on a campaign he went and stayed where he was told by his advisers, without caring in the least where it was. If it was exposed to a hot fire, he remained quite calm and amused himself by looking about to see if any one else showed signs of fear. If it was under shelter, it was all the same to him; there he stayed, and it never seemed to occur to him that his reputation might suffer. On the whole he liked making war,

but it was a matter of indifference to him whether he took the field himself or not; and, present or absent, he left everything to his generals, never expressing an opinion of his own. He was extremely proud, and could not bear opposition to any of his projects. I fancy also that he liked flattery. What makes me think so is that the Queen was always praising him, even his good looks; one day, at the end of an audience which had become a conversation, she asked me whether I did not think him very handsome, the handsomest man I knew. His piety was purely mechanical, showing itself in spiritual terrors, scruples, and petty observances; of religion in the true sense of the word he knew nothing. The Pope, so long as he did not oppose him in any way, was to him a divinity; and he was a passionate admirer of the Jesuits, whose easy-going rules attracted him. Although he enjoyed excellent health, he was nervous about himself, and perpetually looking out for symptoms. A doctor such as the Master Coythier, whom Louis XI enriched so prodigiously in the last years of his life, would soon have become a wealthy and influential personage. Fortunately his physician, an Irishman named Hyghens,[1] who attended on me during my illness, was a man of honour and integrity.

If Philip V did not talk well it was not because he could not, but because of his indolence and diffidence. He left nearly all the conversation to the Queen in private audiences, or with those who accompanied them in the Mall. He let her talk to right and left, and hardly ever put in a word himself. Yet he was quick to note anything absurd or amusing, and could tell a story very well and funnily. We have seen how appropriately and with what dignity he expressed himself at my formal audience; that alone shows that he could speak well when he chose, but he hardly ever took the trouble to do so. Towards the end he became accustomed to me, and in my audiences, which always ended in a chat, I have more than once heard him talk and converse quite pleasantly. But if any one else was present he never said a word to me except to ask some trifling question, and would not be drawn into conversation.

He made no attempt to disguise his love for France. He had a strong feeling of gratitude and veneration for the late King, and of love for Monseigneur; but even more

[1] Probably Higgins.

for his brother, the late Dauphin, whose loss he never ceased to mourn. With the exception of the King, he seemed to take no interest in any member of the Royal Family; and except that he inquired in a very friendly manner about the Duchess de Beauvilliers he never asked me about any member of our Court.

He had scruples about his right to the Spanish throne which are not easy to understand, and still more difficult to reconcile with his constant wish to return, in case of the King's death, to the throne of his fathers, which he had renounced more than once in the most solemn manner possible. The fact is that he was haunted by the recollection of the renunciations made at the time of Louis XIV's marriage. He could not see that Charles II had any right to annul those renunciations by his will, or indeed to dispose of his dominions by will at all; in short, he looked upon himself as an usurper, and this feeling was the subject of endless discussions between himself and his confessor. It had a good deal to do with his abdication, which he was already meditating at the time of my visit; and with his reluctance to resume the Crown after his son's death. I need not say that he never said a word to me on this delicate subject, but my information is derived from trustworthy sources; not, I may say, from Grimaldo, for the matter was never mentioned between us.

The Queen had been very strictly brought up by the Duchess of Parma, her mother, who never let her see anything of the world; and there was no affection between the two. It was different, however, with her step-father the Duke of Parma—who was also her uncle, having married his elder brother's widow when he succeeded to the Duchy; he always treated her with kindness and consideration, and did his best to soften her mother's harsh behaviour to her. Consequently she was much attached to him, and there was no surer way of obtaining a favour from her than to get him to use his influence. She was very clever, and it was always a source of wonder to those who knew her how her natural acuteness and good sense made up for the want of that knowledge of the world which, in her garret at Parma, and subsequently in her perpetual *tête-à-tête* with her husband, she had no opportunity of acquiring. The acuteness with which she formed her judgement of men and affairs was most remarkable. It

would never have failed her had it not been sometimes biassed by ill-temper; but her temper was bad, and, considering the sort of life she led, it is not surprising that it should have been so. She was quite conscious of her own talents, but never sought to draw attention to them. Her usual manner was simple and quiet, enlivened by a natural merriment which even the eternal boredom of her daily existence could not repress; in short, notwithstanding occasional outbursts of peevishness caused by the constraint under which she lived, she was a really charming woman.

When she first arrived in Spain her great anxiety was to prevent the King from feeling the void left by the expulsion of the Princess des Ursins, and the King, who had been looking forward impatiently to her arrival, was not difficult to deal with. But by this time he had become accustomed to seclusion, and she had to submit to his wishes in that respect. Soon after her arrival Alberoni was admitted into their confidence. He had been her sole adviser since her departure from Parma, and in her ignorance of Spanish affairs there was no one else to whom she could turn, in the early days at any rate. Before long his position was exactly that which Madame des Ursins had held in the time of the late Queen, except that he was spared the ridicule attached to her ascendancy on account of her sex, and that he was capable of becoming Prime Minister in name as well as in power. To attain this object of his ambition he adopted the same pernicious plan which Madame des Ursins had found so successful. He took advantage of the King's unfortunate love of retirement, and, with the Queen's connivance, isolated him completely from the outside world. By the time that Alberoni was dismissed the Queen had become weary of the prison to which his ambition and her own had consigned her, and made some vain attempts to escape from bondage. But it was too late; the King's habits of seclusion had become a second nature, and all the Queen's efforts to mitigate her slavery were fruitless. I will now give a brief description of their daily life; the same at all times, in all places, and in all seasons of the year.

At nine in the morning the *azafata* came and opened the curtains of their bed, followed by a manservant bearing a bowl containing a *chaudeau* for the King. Hyghens explained to me what this is when I was recovering from

small-pox, and had one prepared for me to taste. It is a mixture of broth, milk, and wine, with the yolks of one or two eggs, sugar, cinnamon, and cloves. It is white, and has a strong, slightly sweet, taste. I should not care to take much of it, but it is really not disagreeable. While the King was taking this refreshment the *azafata* brought the Queen some needlework, and placed some papers on the bed; she then retired with the valet. After which their Majesties said their morning prayers. Presently Grimaldo arrived and brought some business for discussion, in which the Queen, though busy with her needlework, did not fail to take part; when it was over he retired with his papers, and warned the *azafata*, who immediately brought the King his dressing-gown and slippers. The King then went to an adjoining room, where he was dressed by three valets, no one being admitted to his toilet except the Duke del Arco or the Marquis de Santa-Cruz. As soon as he left the bedroom the Queen began dressing with the assistance of the *azafata*. This was the only time they were ever alone together, and it had to be cut very short, for if it lasted more than seven or eight minutes the King would hear of it and want to know the reason. After this the Queen went into another room, for her public toilet, which lasted about three quarters of an hour. It was attended, besides her ladies-in-waiting, by several noblemen and ladies of distinction. The Infants and their governors were also present; and the King invariably came in after he had finished his talk with his confessor, which did not take very long.

Then came the hour for audiences. Once a week, on Mondays, there was a public audience, an admirable institution if not abused. At these audiences the King receives any one who wishes to see him; alone, if it is desired; the petitioner can talk to him freely, and give him anything in writing. But it must be observed that Spaniards are very unlike Frenchmen; they are discreet, brief, and respectful. After these audiences, which might last for three quarters of an hour, the Chief of the Council of Castille used, also on Mondays, to bring his report of the lawsuits decided by the Council during the previous week, and the subsequent discussion occupied the King for an hour and a half or so; never more, seldom so much. The Queen does not attend these audiences, so that they gave her an interval of about

two hours; this was very precious to her, for it was the only time she had to herself during the whole week. But even that was only when the Court was at Madrid. At the Escurial and other places the Council of Castille does not bring its report, nor are there any public audiences, so that her only free moments were those passed with the *azafata* while dressing in the morning.

As soon as the audiences were over the King and Queen heard Mass together; and after that came dinner. They dined together, but had separate dishes; for the Queen had a good appetite, while the King ate very little, and always the same things; both drank champagne, and no other wine. After dinner, they prayed together; and if Grimaldo had any urgent business he came and reported it briefly. About an hour after dinner they went out shooting every day during the season; at other times for a drive, or a walk in the Mall; I shall describe these amusements later on. If they had not eaten in their carriage, refreshments were served on their return; after which Grimaldo came in and usually remained a long time, for this was the real hour for business. It was also the hour for the Queen to see her confessor, when necessary; but she had no time to talk to him about anything but her sins, for the King was in the adjoining room, and if he thought the confession lasted too long he used to open the door and call her. When Grimaldo left them they prayed or read religious books till supper-time, and filled up the interval afterwards in the same way till they went to bed.

It will be seen that the Queen's life, by night and day, was one continual *tête-à-tête* with the King. The chain which bound her to him was so tight that she never quitted his left side. I have seen her occasionally, when walking with him in the Mall, drop a few paces behind him, if engrossed in conversation; but the King would look round almost immediately, and she regained her place in a couple of bounds, and I or any one she was talking to had to do the same. Such a life seems really intolerable; from my description it will be seen how difficult it was to speak to either the King or Queen in private, for this was a point about which both were extremely jealous. This was what made the *azafata* a personage of importance, for it was possible to send a message to the Queen by her when she was dressing in the morning; and also during the audience

of the Council of Castille, and the public audience, when she could privately introduce any one who wished to speak to the Queen. But the Queen was so afraid of being found out that she very seldom dared to see anybody in this way; she could, however, receive and write letters during these precious moments, but, as may be supposed, she had to write very hastily and to be most careful not to keep any papers.

Naturally, living as she did in an eternal *tête-à-tête* with the King, she understood him thoroughly, and knew exactly how to manage him. The weapon which she employed with the greatest effect was the refusal of certain favours; this always caused a storm, but it invariably ended in the Queen getting her own way. A quarrel of this kind occurred while I was at Madrid, which went to greater extremities than usual. I heard all about it from the Chevalier Bourke and Sartine, who were themselves informed of it by the *azafata*, with many details which I have not forgotten, but which I do not intend to repeat. They wanted me to act as a peace-maker, telling me that the *azafata* greatly wished me to do so. I burst out laughing, and told them that I should most certainly do nothing of the sort; indeed, I should take very good care not to let any one perceive that I knew anything whatever about the matter.

The Queen's great object was to avoid the usual fate of widowed Queens of Spain, and to take precautions against being at the mercy of the King's successor, who was not her son. Having several sons of her own she turned all her thoughts towards establishing one of them as an independent sovereign during the King's lifetime, so that she might have some place to retire to where she would be a person of influence. It was by encouraging her in this purpose that the clever Alberoni acquired so much influence over her, and he was imitated in this respect by Ripperda and Patiño, who came after him. This scheme of hers has had a marked and very pernicious effect on Spanish policy ever since.[1]

The Queen was not popular in Spain. Philip V's first wife had been almost adored, and the people had strongly resented the subjection to Madame des Ursins into which he

[1] Readers of Carlyle's "Frederick the Great" will remember the disturbing influence of the "Termagant of Spain," as he calls her, in the business of the Pragmatic Sanction.

fell after her death. The King's second marriage was the work of Madame des Ursins, and that alone was sufficient to make it unpopular. The present Queen had indeed arranged before her arrival for the downfall of Madame des Ursins, but even that was of no avail to conciliate the Spaniards; and she, on her part, deeply resented their dislike to her marriage. It is astonishing to what lengths this reciprocal aversion was carried. When she drove out with the King the people in the streets used to shout, "Viva el rey y la Savoyana, y la Savoyana!" repeating "la Savoyana" over and over again at the top of their voices, so that there should be no mistake about it; not a voice cried, "Viva la reina!" They meant the late Queen, who was a Princess of Savoy. The Queen affected to despise these demonstrations, but it was evident that she resented them. She said to me more than once, in a tone of anger and annoyance, "The Spaniards do not like me, but I hate them well in return!" where were a few Spanish noblemen and ladies about the Court whom she liked, however; and others, like the Duke del Arco, whom she treated kindly to please the King. Also to please him she was kind to French people, but she did not really like them. She showed a strongly marked preference for Italians, as her countrymen; there were a good many of them about the Court, and they formed a regular cabal, which was joined by the Flemings and Irish. The Spaniards hated and despised this cabal, and made no attempt to disguise their feelings; they detested the Italians more than anything in the world, and next to them the Flemings; the Irish they tolerated, and consideration for the King's feelings kept them quiet with regard to the French.

Shooting was the King's daily amusement, and consequently that of the Queen also. Their Majesties did me the singular honour of inviting me to join them one day, and I had a good view of the proceedings; it is enough to see them once, for one day's sport is exactly like another. Deer and wild-boars are not to be found on the plains, only in the country adjacent to the mountains; and this is far too rough for hunting them with hounds as is the custom in France and other countries. The plains, too, are arid and stony, and full of deep gullies which cannot be seen till one is on the very edge; so that the best hounds and greyhounds would soon be exhausted in the pursuit of hares; moreover,

their feet would suffer, and they would be continually lame. What herbage there is is so rank and strong that the hounds would not get much assistance from their noses. The King had long since given up hawking, and never got on a horse now, so that his sport was entirely confined to battue-shooting.

The Duke del Arco used to choose the locality and the place for their Majesties to stand. There two large butts were constructed of branches, back to back, nearly closed in, but with wide openings breast-high. The principal butt was occupied only by the King and Queen, with the Captain of the Guard on duty, the Grand Equerry, and four loaders; they were provided with about twenty guns and lots of ammunition. In the other butt, on the day I was out, were the Prince of the Asturias, and six or seven gentlemen besides myself; we had a good many guns, and several loaders. The Queen always took out one of her Ladies of the Palace, who went in a carriage by herself, and took a book or some needlework with her by way of occupation, for she never left her carriage and not a soul came near her all day. Their Majesties used to drive as fast as possible, with relays of horses, for they always had at least three or four leagues to go, and one league over those roads is equivalent to two between Paris and Versailles. All the shooters got out at the butts, and the carriages and horses were then sent away, together with the unfortunate Lady of the Palace, to a considerable distance, out of sight lest they should alarm the game.

Three or four hundred peasants had surrounded a considerable tract of country on the previous evening, and at dawn they began calling out, to alarm the animals and cause them to gather together, at the same time driving them gently in the direction of the butts. The shooters in the butts had to stand silent and motionless, and their clothes had to be of some inconspicuous colour. We stood thus in silence for about an hour and a half, and I did not find it very amusing. At last we heard cries in the distance; troops of animals began to pass within gunshot; and the King and Queen opened a hot fire. This pleasure, or rather this butchery, lasted over half an hour; during which we watched numberless stags, hinds, roedeer, wild-boars, hares, wolves, badgers, foxes, and stoats passing, some being killed and some mutilated.

The rule is that no one may fire till the King and Queen have finished; but very often they allowed the Grand Equerry and the Captain of the Guard to shoot, so, as it was impossible to know exactly who was shooting, we had to wait till the fire from the King's butt had ceased entirely. Then it was the Prince's turn; but by that time there was very little left for him to shoot, and still less for anybody else. I did manage, however, to shoot a fox, but I am afraid I fired a little sooner than I ought to have done; I was rather ashamed of myself and apologised to the Prince of the Asturias, but he only laughed good-naturedly, as did the rest of the company. When the beaters come up to the butts the carriages are sent for, and the game laid out before the King. On that day there were more than a dozen head of big game, besides hares, foxes, and stoats. Darkness came on shortly after we left the butts. Such is the amusement of their Catholic Majesties on all working days. The peasants employed as beaters are paid, and the King very often orders some more money to be distributed among them as he enters his carriage.

From the middle of February to the middle of April the animals were left to breed in peace; there was no shooting, and the game of Mall took its place as a daily amusement. The Mall was a fine stretch of ground, very wide and extremely long. The King used to play with his equerries, with the Marquis de Santa-Cruz, or with some other nobleman; he always played three complete rounds, backwards and forwards. The Queen walked at his left side, changing round when he reached the end and turned back. Her charming manners made these walks very pleasant. Only noblemen were admitted on to the ground, with the Lady of the Palace in attendance on the Queen; one followed the King and Queen, and she conversed with an amiable familiarity, amusing the King by her jests. Valouse, the Chief Equerry, was a good deal put out by them sometimes, which made her laugh all the more; she also liked teasing the Duke del Arco, and delighted in setting him and Santa-Cruz by the ears; sometimes they used to say pretty sharp things to each other. The Duke del Arco would very often pay the Queen back in her own coin, answering her very freely and funnily. If one of the players made a bad stroke she would burst out laughing and chaff him about it; so that altogether this walk on the Mall always seemed to

end too soon. The King, always grave, would smile sometimes, and let fall a brief sentence or two. He played very well and gracefully; and the Queen used to applaud him freely.

A few days before I went to Lerma I had received letters from Cardinal Dubois about the honours for my sons. Nothing, to all appearance, could be more satisfactory; he gave me advice as to how I should proceed; begged me to tell him if he could further my wishes in any way, and assured me that letters from the Duke of Orleans and himself would arrive in good time. Nevertheless, there was something about his assurances which smacked of insincerity; this was only what I had expected, and though I thanked him for his good wishes as though I believed in them, I resolved not to trust too much to the letters he promised, but to take such steps as I could to attain my end without them. Then I fell ill with small-pox, and was kept for six weeks in seclusion, during which time the Abbé de Saint-Simon kept up my correspondence with Dubois, and at the same time cultivated the acquaintance of Grimaldo and Sartine, and talked to them about my affair.

The long-promised letters arrived about the end of my quarantine; they were such as I had expected. Cardinal Dubois mentioned my wishes to Grimaldo, but in a round-about sort of way; if one sentence showed a wish to assist me, he destroyed all its force in the next by his cautious and respectful assurances that he did not wish to importune the King of Spain, or ask him to do anything contrary to his own wishes. His letter, in short, was just the sort of rigmarole that a man would write who, without the slightest wish to serve one, does not like to back out of his promise altogether. The Duke of Orleans' letter to the King of Spain was feebler still; it was like a pencil drawing half washed out by rain; it was so respectful and apologetic that it left the impression of being one of those letters which people can hardly refuse to write, though perfectly indifferent about their success.

Naturally, I was not at all pleased with these letters; but such as they were I had to make use of them. The Abbé de Saint-Simon sent them to Sartine, asking him to give them to Grimaldo, for I dared not write myself for fear of infection. I had not mentioned to either Sartine or Grimaldo that I did not expect the letters to be very satis-

factory ; when they saw them they were equally astonished and indignant, and consulted together as to the best course to pursue. Grimaldo determined to take a bold step, which I confess alarmed me ; he came to the conclusion that the letters would do me more harm than good, and he resolved to suppress them altogether, leading the King of Spain to think that the Duke of Orleans had refrained from motives of delicacy from asking him to show me any favours, and that he would be all the more pleased if they were conferred unasked. He said he would do his best, and he thought in this way he could answer for the Grandeeship and the Golden Fleece. After consulting Hyghens, the doctor, who knew the ground as well as Sartine or Grimaldo, and who had become a real friend of mine, I resolved to leave the business in Grimaldo's hands, trusting to his good-will; and, as we shall soon see, the result was entirely satisfactory.

On the 9th of January the exchange of Princesses took place on the Isle of Pheasants, in the little river Bidassoa, which separates the two kingdoms. A wooden house had been constructed for the purpose, very simple compared with that which in 1659 had been the scene of the conferences between Cardinal Mazarin and Don Louis de Haro, Prime Minister of Spain, resulting in the signature of the Peace of the Pyrenees ; and subsequently of the meeting between Louis XIV and his mother and Philip IV, her brother. As I had foreseen, Prince de Rohan, who represented the French Government, thought this a good opportunity to obtain recognition of the silly pretensions to superior rank set up by his family ; fortunately I had got the Duke de Liria to warn the Marquis de Santa-Cruz, the Spanish representative, that his French colleague would claim the style of " His Highness." Santa-Cruz was up in arms at once, and declared that Prince de Rohan should get no concessions out of him. The deed of exchange was in duplicate ; in the French copy Mademoiselle de Montpensier was said to have been escorted by " the Most Excellent Lord, His Highness the Prince de Rohan." To this Santa-Cruz made no objection—it was not for him to say how Prince de Rohan should be described by his own government ; but when Rohan claimed the same distinction in the Spanish copy Santa-Cruz refused flatly.

Prince de Rohan then suggested compromises : he said if he were given the style of Highness he would not object

to Santa-Cruz assuming it also. Santa-Cruz laughed sarcastically, saying that neither of them was a real Prince; and that they should take upon themselves to promote each other by assuming the style of "Highness" to which neither was entitled, was rather a strange suggestion. After one or two more equally futile proposals Rohan said he would waive all titles of honour in the Spanish deed, allowing Santa-Cruz to style himself Excellency and Most Excellent Lord. But this Prince by the grace of his mother's charms had to deal with a man too acute to fall into such a trap; Santa-Cruz replied that he was sick of all these fancies, which had already delayed the exchange of Princesses for two days; he said he was Rohan's equal in every respect, and would not allow the slightest difference in their respective descriptions; he should assume the style to which he was entitled as a Grandee, and he expected Rohan to be contented with that of a French Duke; if that was not agreed to instantly he would remove his Princess to a more convenient place, and despatch a courier to Madrid for further instructions. This brought the Duke de Rohan to his bearings; he dared not risk the anger of their Catholic Majesties, which might possibly have the effect of depriving him of the "Highness" in the French deed; so he gave in at once.

The exchange was duly carried out; and, after reciprocal compliments, and a distribution of presents from our King to the Spaniards, the Princesses pursued their respective journeys. I saw Santa-Cruz at Lerma with the Duke de Liria, and he gave me a full account of these proceedings. He showed me the present given to him on behalf of our King; he said nothing, but smiled; I merely shrugged my shoulders; words were unnecessary between us. The fact is that these presents of jewellery were few in number, and wretchedly mean; the value of the others may be judged from that given to Santa-Cruz, the principal person in the exchange of Princesses. The Spaniards scoffed at them openly, and I nearly died of shame. But, to whatever elevation fortune may raise a cad, the lowness of his origin is sure to betray itself, in one way or another.

My quarantine came to an end just two days before the arrival of Mademoiselle de Montpensier at Lerma. Their Catholic Majesties had shown me every possible attention during my illness and convalescence, and sent me word

several times that they wished to see me the moment my quarantine was over. But, as I knew the King was very much afraid of small-pox, I put off going till I received a positive command, which I had to obey. My face was still very red, in spite of all the drugs the doctor gave me to take off the redness; the weather was extremely cold, and that made it worse. Their Majesties congratulated me on my recovery, and a little conversation ensued about the skill and attention shown by M. Hyghens.

After this I brought up a matter which I had been expressly ordered to mention at the first audience at which I could talk of business, namely, the Emperor's intention of creating a number of Knights of the Golden Fleece, among them the eldest son of the Duke of Lorraine, who was making preparations to invest his son with the collar in great ceremony on behalf of the Emperor. I was to try and prevent the King of Spain from showing his resentment too openly, for fear of disturbing the negotiations just about to open at Cambrai, where it was intended to settle this and other points in favour of Spain by the good offices of France; I was also to call attention to the marked partiality shown by the Duke of Lorraine for the Emperor, notwithstanding that their Catholic Majesties had shown themselves favourable to his inclusion in the general treaty of peace; I was to advise the King of Spain to make the Duke of Lorraine pay for this favour by delaying their consent for a time and keeping him in suspense. I acquitted myself of my commission in the terms prescribed to me, and had no difficulty in obtaining a favourable reply on both points.

Their Majesties seemed much annoyed by the Emperor's encroachment on their rights regarding the order of the Golden Fleece. His pretensions could only be based upon his sovereignty of the Low Countries, where the first Knights of the Golden Fleece had been created. But Philip the Good had not instituted the Order in his capacity of Governor of the Low Countries, but as Duke of Burgundy. It is true that, according to this, the Order ought to have followed the Duchy of Burgundy, and consequently the Grand-mastership should have passed to the Kings of France; but our Kings, having their own Orders of Knighthood, never cared about the Golden Fleece; and allowed the Kings of Spain to assume the office of Grand Master as descendants of the heiress of the last Duke of Burgundy. No objection

had been raised to Philip V's rights at the time of the treaty of Utrecht; which was taken as the base of the definitive treaty of peace now to be concluded between him and the Emperor. Their Catholic Majesties were quite willing to treat the Emperor's pretensions with silent contempt, provided that France undertook to see that full justice was done to them at Cambrai. As for the Duke of Lorraine, they said they knew well enough that he, like his forefathers, was entirely devoted to the House of Austria; they did not mean to gratify his vanity by appearing to attach importance to the doings of a petty Prince like him; at the same time, they thought it would be as well to keep him waiting for what he wanted, and let him see how little he deserved any consideration from the Sovereigns of Spain or France.

After this my audience became a conversation. Their Majesties began talking about Cardinal Borgia, who had just arrived, and all the news he brought from Rome. While on this topic the King began to laugh, looked at the Queen, and said the Cardinal had told them a very funny story. I smiled, as if to ask him what it was, without venturing to speak. He looked at the Queen again, saying: "We ought not to repeat it, but shall we tell him?" "Why not?" said the Queen. "Well, then," said the King, "it is only on condition that you will keep it entirely to yourself!" I gave my promise, and kept it; the story will never be known unless somebody lets these Memoirs see the light after I am gone; and then there will be nobody left whom it concerns. The King then did me the honour of telling me that Cardinal Borgia reported that Cardinal de Rohan, with all his magnificence and his charming manners, was not thought much of at Rome, for every one was displeased with his fatuity and personal vanity; he even went so far, at his age too, as to take frequent milk-baths to make his skin soft and beautiful; he did it with the utmost secrecy, nevertheless the fact had become known, and aroused the indignation of the pious, and the contempt and raillery of the worldly. And the King and Queen began to comment on the story with hearty laughter, in which I joined, for the King had told it in a very clever and amusing way. I assured them that I was not at all scandalised, for I had long known the character of this Father of the Church.

My audience having come to an end with renewed good

wishes from their Majesties, I had one of the Prince of the Asturias, who also received me very kindly. Like his father and mother, he seemed delighted to hear of the approach of the Princess, and very impatient to see her. In fact, I had no sooner returned to my quarters for dinner than I heard that their Majesties and the Prince of the Asturias, dressed in common clothes, had started without any attendants in one of the carriages of the Duke del Arco, who had gone with complimentary messages from them to meet Mademoiselle de Montpensier at Cogollos, a rather wretched village about four leagues from Lerma. The Duke del Arco, having warned the Duchess de Monteillano and the other ladies not to show any signs of surprise, was ushered into the presence of the Princess, with his royal attendants. He purposely prolonged his speech of congratulation to give them time to have a good look at her; then he asked permission to present a lady and two noblemen of his staff who were very anxious to pay their respects. But the request seemed so unusual that the mystery was spoilt; the Princess guessed who her visitors were, and hastened to kiss their hands; they immediately embraced her, and the visit passed with expressions of kindness on their part, and of respect and gratitude on hers. It lasted about a quarter of an hour, after which their Majesties got into their carriage with the Prince, and returned very late to Lerma.

CHAPTER XXIII

1722

The marriage of the Prince of the Asturias and Mlle de Montpensier—The rehearsal of the marriage ceremony—My amusement—The King of Spain makes me and my son Grandees of Spain and confers on my eldest son the Order of the Golden Fleece—The marriage—I interview the Marquis de Villena—The ball—The public *coucher* of the newly-married pair—Maulevrier's absence and his displeasure—I am admitted to the Princess's bedside during her illness—The King and Queen's anxiety and inquiries—Investiture of my second son—Chavigny—Grimaldo is angry at his appointment as Envoy—The King and Queen snub Chavigny—I fail to reinstate the Duke of Berwick in the good graces of the King and Queen, or to procure a Grandeeship for the Duke de St. Aignan.

NEXT morning Maulevrier and I went, with all my carriages and suite, to Cogollos, to pay our respects to the Princess; it was necessary to make an early start, for we had to get back in time to have something to eat before the Princess herself arrived at Lerma. We got off by seven o'clock, and my mules took us at a great pace. We were presented to the Princess, who was just finishing her toilet; and I then presented my sons and the members of my staff. The Duchess de Monteillano and her other ladies did all they could to induce her to say something to us, but all in vain; she would not speak a single word. We did not stop there a quarter of an hour, for we had no time to lose; we returned to my quarters, swallowed a hasty meal, and then went to Lerma. It was lucky we made such haste, for the Princess arrived in less than half an hour.

The King and Queen, with the Prince of the Asturias, hastened to meet her as she got out of her carriage; but did not see much of what occurred, for the marriage was to take place immediately; I had again to contrive some way of taking precedence of the Nuncio, and, fearing lest he might remember what had happened at the signature of the marriage-contract, I thought I had better take up a position in the chapel at once. No courtiers were there when I

went in; the King's *prie-Dieu* was placed in front of the altar, not far from the steps, with two hassocks on a carpet for the bride and bridegroom. I placed myself outside the carpet, on the right, and waited; I found more to amuse me than I had expected.

Cardinal Borgia, dressed in his pontifical robes, was standing in the epistoller's corner with his face towards me; two almoners in surplices were holding a great book open before him, and he was rehearsing the part he had to play in the coming ceremony. The worthy prelate could not manage it at all; he read out loud, and all wrong; the almoners corrected his mistakes, he scolded them, and began afresh; again they had to set him right, till at last he became really angry, and shook them, seizing them by their surplices. I laughed till I could laugh no more, for he was so intent on his lesson that he noticed nothing. The marriage-service in Spain is begun at the church-door, like the baptismal service: their Majesties arrived, with the Prince and Princess and the whole Court, and the King was announced out loud. "Let them wait!" cried the Cardinal angrily, "I am not ready"; and they did wait accordingly, while he continued his rehearsal, still in a fury and redder than his skull-cap. At last he went to the door, where there was a considerable delay; I should have followed him out of curiosity if I had not a reason for sticking to my place. I must have missed something amusing, for when the King and Queen arrived at their *prie-Dieu* they were talking and laughing, and so were all the courtiers.

When the Nuncio came near me he made a gesture of surprise, ejaculating, "Signor, signor!" but I was determined not to understand. I pointed laughingly at the Cardinal, telling him that, for the credit of the Sacred College, he ought to have instructed him better in his functions. This pleasantry, uttered with the most ingenuous air I could put on, without paying the least attention to the Nuncio's demonstrations, had the effect of diverting his attention, and fortunately the Cardinal did more and more to attract it to himself as the ceremony proceeded; he seemed not to know where he was or what he was doing, his almoners had to correct his mistakes every moment, while he darted furious glances at them; even the King and Queen could not refrain from laughing. I could see only the backs of the Prince and Princess, as they knelt on

their hassocks in front of the *prie-Dieu*. Fortunately on this occasion I had to deal with the Nuncio only, for the King's Majordomo-major had stationed himself elsewhere. We were surrounded by a throng of Grandees and persons of distinction, and the whole chapel was so full that it was impossible to stir.

The ceremony did not take long; when it was over their Majesties and the newly married couple rose from their knees and retired to the lower end of their carpet; here they conferred together in a low voice for about the space of a good *credo*; then the King advanced by himself to the place where I was still standing. He then addressed me in these words: "Sir," he said, "I am so well pleased with you in every way, and so thoroughly satisfied with the manner in which you have discharged the duties of your mission, that I wish to give you some marks of my esteem and good-will. I create you a Grandee of Spain of the first class, as well as whichever of your sons you may select, the dignity to be borne by you both simultaneously; and I make your eldest son a Knight of the Golden Fleece." I instantly knelt and embraced his knees; trying at the same time to express my gratitude and my ardent desire to show myself worthy of the favours he had deigned to bestow on me. Then I kissed his hand, and called my sons; but it was some moments before they could be told they were wanted, during which time I renewed my thanks. When they came I called the younger and told him to kneel and thank the King, who had loaded us with favours, and created him a Grandee of Spain. He kissed the King's hand, who said that what he had just done gave him great satisfaction. I then presented my eldest son to return thanks for the Golden Fleece, and he also kissed the King's hand. Then the King returned to the Queen, we followed him, and she said a great many obliging things to us; their Majesties then returned to their apartments, followed by the Prince and Princess.

I was immediately surrounded by a crowd of courtiers offering me their congratulations; in replying to which I was careful to let the Grandees see that I felt myself highly honoured in being invested with their dignity, though I already possessed the highest rank in my own country; not forgetting to assure the Knights of the Golden Fleece how much I appreciated the honour conferred on my eldest

son by his admission to that noble and distinguished Order. Although Grimaldo had assured me that these favours would almost certainly be bestowed upon me, I had not in the least expected them on this occasion ; so far as I could judge the King's action was very popular with the numerous crowd of courtiers present. When I had at last managed to extricate myself I went to Grimaldo's room and thanked him most warmly for all he had done for me ; I was overcome with joy at having attained the sole object for which I had undertaken this embassy to Spain, and I felt that my success was almost entirely due to him.

Owing to the extreme youth of the newly married pair, and the delicate health of the Prince of the Asturias, their Majesties decided that they should not live together as husband and wife for the present ; probably not for another year. As, however, there were many persons evilly disposed towards the Regent who would catch at any pretext for annulling the marriage, I thought it desirable that the Prince and Princess should be formally put to bed together in the presence of witnesses, as had been done in the case of the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy. Such a thing is entirely contrary to the manners and feelings of the Spaniards, who look upon our French custom of putting bride and bridegroom formally to bed as immodest and undignified ; and Grimaldo, when I consulted him on the subject, told me such a thing was quite out of the question. I ventured, however, to speak to their Majesties about it, and after some discussion they agreed that the same ceremonial should be observed as at the Duke of Burgundy's wedding. I told Grimaldo afterwards what I had done ; he seemed very much surprised, but said it did not matter, only he thought the Court would be shocked.

I did not wish to incur the disapproval of the Spaniards, and it struck me that the best way to avoid it was to get the Marquis de Villena on my side, if possible. He was Major-domo-major to the King, a thorough Spaniard, highly respected in every way ; and I knew his opinion would carry great weight. I had sedulously cultivated his acquaintance duing the short time at my disposal, and he had responded to my advances in a very friendly manner. I went to him, therefore, and told him what had been decided, explaining that my object was to set the reality of the marriage beyond dispute, but I was afraid lest such an innovation should

shock public opinion in Spain. He listened attentively, and then said that each country had its own customs, but such customs were not immutable laws ; they could be set aside when occasion required. In the present case I had brought forward strong considerations in favour of the proposed ceremony, and he thought no one would object to it when the reasons were understood. I said I was greatly relieved to hear him say so, and I should be extremely obliged if he would express himself in the same sense, rather publicly, at the King's ball that evening ; for people would be very much influenced by his opinion. He promised very readily to do so, and kept his word ; the result was completely satisfactory, for nobody ventured to express any disapprobation.

After this I went to supper with the Duke del Arco, who had invited all the principal Frenchmen to meet me, as well as several Spanish noblemen of distinction. The supper was cooked in the Spanish fashion, but a very good *olla* made up for some other dishes which were strange to us ; and we had some excellent wine of La Mancha. The wine and oil which these noblemen make on their estates for their own consumption are admirable ; whereas, from carelessness and indolence in the manufacture, those that are sold to the public, though from the same vineyards and olive-groves, are very bad ; the smell alone is intolerable. The Duke also gave us some little red-fleshed hams, which are very rare even in Spain ; they are only made on his estates and those of two other noblemen. The pigs are shut up in small parks swarming with vipers, which constitute their principal food ; these hams have an exquisite taste and perfume, it is impossible to eat anything more delicious. The supper was magnificently served, the guests were cheerful and well-mannered, and it lasted a long time ; as soon as it was over we all went to the King's apartments, where everything was prepared for the ball.

We had not to wait long ; their Majesties soon arrived, and the Queen opened the ball with the Prince of the Asturias. I need not dwell on the appearance of the room, as the arrangements were the same as those of the ball at Madrid, which I described fully. The Nuncio, Maulevrier, and I were given seats in the recess of a window ; I had been previously informed that a seat would also be provided for my eldest son, but it occurred to me that, as he was neither

Duke nor Grandee, such a favour might occasion some jealousy among the Spanish nobility ; I therefore asked the King most respectfully to allow my son to absent himself from the ball on the ground that he had only just recovered from a second illness which had attacked him while I was laid up with small-pox. I was not allowed to avail myself much of my own seat, for I was compelled to take part in many minuets and country-dances. The coat I wore was very heavy, and I was extremely tired after all my exertions of that and the previous day ; but this was the wedding festivity, I had been loaded with favours beyond my utmost desires, it was in a sense a ball given to me ; and it would have been ungracious to refuse to dance.

It became known during the ball that there would be a public *coucher* for the bridal couple ; some surprise was expressed, but nobody seemed displeased. The ball went off very merrily, though with due decorum and dignity ; it ended at two o'clock, when all the guests followed the King and Queen into the antechambers of the Princess's apartments. Only the necessary attendants went into her own room. After a time I was called in. Their Majesties and the Prince seemed very merry. Everything passed as arranged beforehand, according to the precedent set at the Duke of Burgundy's marriage ; and I was at last at liberty to return to Villahalmanzo and go to bed, of which I was greatly in need.

I was not allowed to stay in bed very long, however ; I had to be at Lerma early next day to attend the nuptial Mass. In Spain, where weddings take place in the afternoon or evening, this Mass has to be postponed till next day, and it is during its celebration that the symbolical ceremonies are gone through, and the newly wedded pair placed under the canopy. The arrangements were the same as on the previous day. The Nuncio was very civil, and took his place by my side as if quite accustomed to this arrangement ; Maulevrier was not present ; he had started for Madrid quite early, without saying a word to me. After the celebration I accompanied their Majesties to the entrance of their apartments, and they laughed a good deal at Cardinal Borgia, whose performance had been no better than on the previous day. As they went in I asked permission to take leave of them after dinner, for they were to start for Madrid next day. Then I went to dine with the Duke del Arco,

who had again invited me to meet a distinguished company. I did not forget to do justice a second time to the *olla* and the viper-fed hams. It pleases the Spaniards to see a Frenchman accommodate himself to their national tastes by eating saffron ; I always took care at my own house to have several dishes flavoured with it, and they were delighted to see me eating it as if I liked it. But they mix it freely with their bread and with the salt in the salt-cellars ; and I confess I could not carry my complaisance so far as that.

The dinner-party was merry, and lasted a long time. Maulevrier's absence was the subject of general comment ; I said very little about it, but that did not prevent the others from blaming it freely, for he was not popular. I had not consulted him beforehand about the public *coucher* ; I merely announced it to him at the ball as a piece of news. He was very much surprised, and asked with an air of great displeasure how a thing so contrary to all precedent in Spain could have been decided on ; I merely replied that such was their Majesties' pleasure, and began talking about the dancing. He hardly spoke a word to me for the rest of the evening, and looked very cross. The fact is that this was only the last straw ; he had been extremely mortified by the honours bestowed on me, especially as they had been received with general applause ; he showed his feelings so plainly that the courtiers laughed at him and called him the angry cat ; many of them amused themselves by going up to him and congratulating him, as on an event auspicious for France. He could not avoid congratulating me, but it was in a very sulky tone ; however, I pretended to take it as genuine, and thanked him cordially ; he had not the patience to hear me out, but went off to another part of the room. He said nothing to my sons beyond a curt word or two in passing. Next morning he took his departure without saying a word to me or any one else, and thus deliberately missed a function which, as Ambassador, he certainly ought to have attended.

After dinner I took leave of the King and Queen, as they were returning to Madrid next day. I did not myself start till the day following, the 23rd of January ; for I had so many letters and despatches to send off that a whole day was hardly sufficient for them ; nevertheless, as the Court took five days over the journey to Madrid, I arrived there the day before them. The Princess of the Asturias did not

feel well towards the end of the journey ; she was feverish, and red blotches appeared on her face, which eventually proved to be erysipelas. When I went to the palace I found their Majesties in great alarm, which I tried vainly to soothe by telling them that she had had both measles and small-pox, and attributing her illness to fatigue. Next day they seemed still more uneasy, and much put out because all the preparations for festivities and for a great ball had to be suspended.

They asked me whether I had seen the Princess ; I said I had been to the door of her rooms and inquired after her health, but had not gone in ; whereupon they both told me that I must see her. Nothing could be more contrary to Spanish customs, for in Spain no man, not even a near relation, is allowed to see a woman in bed ; and as I had been the cause of this custom being broken through by the public *coucher* I was particularly unwilling to shock public opinion by infringing it a second time. They repeated the same inquiry for three days running ; they heard from the Duchess de Monteillano that she had vainly tried to persuade me to go in ; and they said they insisted on my seeing what condition the Princess was in, and how she was treated. I knew that both the King and Queen went to see her several times a day, and that the Queen gave her food and medicine with her own hands ; so I assured them that if they only wished me to inform the Duke of Orleans that she was well cared for, a personal visit was quite unnecessary, for I would certainly tell him that she was much better off under their care than she would have been under his own. But on the third day they became really angry, and ordered me so positively to see her every day that I dared not disobey.

Next morning accordingly I was admitted to the Princess's bedside, and the Duchess de Monteillano, in spite of my remonstrances, held up a candle so that I might see her more plainly. The greater part of her face seemed much inflamed with erysipelas, which, I was informed, extended to her neck and bosom. I went at once to the King and Queen, who had received me in private every day since their return from Lerma. After some conversation about her illness the King said : " But you do not know all ; there is something more which I must tell you : two glands in the Princess's neck are very much swollen ; it is that which makes us so uneasy, for we do not know what to think of it ! " I saw

at once what he meant. I replied that I understood what he was hinting at, and I could at once assure him that his fears were unfounded. I could not deny that the Duke of Orleans had led a most licentious life, but I was quite certain that his health had never suffered from it; there had never been the slightest alteration in his daily habits; and I had lived in such constant and familiar intercourse with him that if there had been anything of the sort I must have perceived it; yet I could assure their Majesties most solemnly that such a suspicion had never entered my head. Moreover, the health of the Duchess of Orleans had also been uniformly good; her attendance on the King and her other public duties had never been omitted for a single day; and none of her children had ever shown the slightest trace of hereditary disease.

Their Majesties listened to me with great attention, and seemed much relieved by my assurances, for, as they said, they felt sure I would not deceive them. After a little conversation the King said he still felt uneasy on another point: the disease of his late Queen had begun with swelled glands and had eventually developed into scrofula, which had defied all medical treatment. I said that, according to the reports which had reached us in France the swollen glands of the late Queen had been the result of a goitre which she had brought from her native Alps, where it is a very common complaint; her sister, the Duchess of Burgundy, had not been entirely exempt from it; but neither the Princess herself nor any of her relations on either side had ever shown any sign of a goitre, so I thought the swelling of the glands was only produced by the erysipelas.

The conversation lasted a long time; before it ended I received a fresh order to see the Princess every day, and to report their Majesties' anxiety and solicitude to the Duke of Orleans, without, however, alluding to the suspicions they had expressed. Two days later I perceived that their alarm had not quite subsided; they told me that Hyghens had been ordered to write a circumstantial report of the case to Chirac, the Duke of Orleans' physician, as the person best acquainted with the Princess's constitution, begging him to reply frankly, without any of the compliments and circuitous expressions which doctors too commonly employ. I wrote to Cardinal Dubois and the Duke of Orleans, reporting the constant attentions of their Majesties to the

Princess, and their anxiety about her health; in a private letter to the Duke of Orleans I mentioned the secret cause for it; but only to him. That was a matter for Chirac to discuss with Hyghens, if he chose to touch on that point.

Though I saw the Princess every day, she never spoke to me; her ladies and the Prince of the Asturias, whom I often met in her room, did all they could to draw her into conversation, but they never managed to extract a single word from her. When the erysipelas began to pass off, I contented myself with waiting for the return of their Majesties from shooting, and saying a word to them in passing.

On the 1st of February my second son was formally invested with the dignity of Grandee of Spain; it happened to be, to a day, the eighty-seventh anniversary of my father's reception in the Parliament of Paris as Duke and Peer of France. I asked the Duke del Arco to act as my son's sponsor. The ceremony, which is very imposing, was attended by a larger number of Grandees than on any previous occasion; so I was told at least. I entertained forty-five guests afterwards at the dinner which it is customary to give, all Grandees or persons of the highest distinction. Although Maulevrier had behaved with such silly rudeness I thought it right to send him an invitation which he declined, not very politely. Considering his position as Ambassador, however, I thought I would make another attempt, and, though overwhelmed with the number of calls I had to make, two on each Grandee, one to ask him to be present at the ceremony, a second to invite him to dinner, I went with my second son to call on Maulevrier, who then changed his mind and came to my dinner. He cut but a sorry figure there, however; the more so because my other guests, to show their pleasure at the honours bestowed on me, behaved much more cheerfully and with less stiffness than is customary with the Spaniards. They also did honour to the fare provided for them; much more was eaten and drunk than is usual at such repasts in Spain.

I received a letter from Cardinal Dubois at this time, in which, after speaking of the failing health of the Grand-duke of Tuscany, and the probable consequences of his death, he told me that Chavigny, the King's envoy at Genoa, was so thoroughly well-informed in those matters that he might very likely send him to take a tour in Spain,

and he recommended him strongly to my good offices. This Chavigny was one of the two brothers whom I mentioned formerly, who succeeded for a time in deceiving the late King and his Court. They were the sons of a lawyer at Beaune ; their real name was Chavignard, but they assumed that of the ancient and illustrious family of Chauvigny-le-Roy, which has long been extinct, and induced the late M. de Soubise to believe that they were his relations. He introduced them into society, and obtained an abbey for one of them, a commission as guidon in the gendarmerie for the other. After a time they were discovered to be impostors ; the King cancelled his grants to them, and expelled them from his dominions. They led a wandering life for a time under the name of Chavigny, which was as near as they dared go to the illustrious name they had usurped ; and became journalists and newsmongers in Holland. Torcy made use of them in an underhand way in the negotiations for peace ; and after the King's death they ventured to return to France. They were both clever fellows, but especially the elder, whose manners were more insinuating than his brother's ; they soon saw that the Abbé Dubois would be the man for them, if they could obtain access to him. Having frequented the society of the English in Holland, they procured an introduction to Stair, and at his house made the acquaintance of Rémond, who spoke to Dubois about them in such warm terms that he sent for them. He was much pleased with the elder brother, recognising in him a man who might be useful and would not be hampered by delicate scruples. He employed him in various subordinate capacities, especially in his negotiations with England ; and finally sent him as envoy to Genoa. Such was the man whom he now selected for a secret mission to Spain.

When I informed Grimaldo of Chavigny's expected arrival, he became very angry, exclaiming : " What, sir ! when the Duke of Orleans has just been admitted to a personal reconciliation with the King of Spain, is this the moment that he chooses for sending us Chavigny, an impostor so publicly disgraced that his story is notorious all over Europe ? What does your Cardinal Dubois mean by sending us such a man ? It is a clear proof that he means to take us in in some way ! " He went on in this way for some time, speaking his mind very freely about the Cardinal. I let

him talk himself out, and then said I agreed with him about Chavigny's reputation; but the Cardinal seemed to trust him; he was sending him without telling me beforehand; all I knew about it was that Chavigny was supposed to be well acquainted with Italian affairs, especially with regard to the failing health of the Grand-duke. Grimaldo, still fuming, replied that they knew quite as much about Italy as Chavigny; and if Cardinal Dubois thought he had any special information he ought to have embodied it in a memoir, instead of sending a man to whom nobody would speak.

After he had calmed down a little I said quietly that he must see Chavigny, if only to hear what he had to say. He replied that even if he could bring himself to meet Chavigny he could assure me that the King would not allow him to enter his presence. I said that, while I agreed with him as to the badness of the choice, the Regent would have some right to complain if the King of Spain declined to receive his envoy; it would be treating him as if there was a rupture between the two countries. Grimaldo replied angrily: "Well, then; why do they send us a man notoriously disgraced? What could they do worse if there were really a rupture? They must think us very stupid, to treat us so contemptuously. But we will pay them in their own coin; we will return them their rascal just as he came; that will teach them not to send us rogues who are universally recognised as such. Next time they want to take us in they will have to send us one who, at any rate, looks like an honest man!" I saw that to continue the conversation would only make him more obstinate, so I left him, begging him to think the matter over.

When I saw him next day I asked him laughingly what sort of temper he was in. As he replied very amicably and politely, I told him that the whole business was extremely unpleasant to me; but he knew Cardinal Dubois' ill-feeling towards me. If the King of Spain affronted Chavigny by refusing to see him, the Cardinal, who, in my absence, was all-powerful with the Duke of Orleans, would certainly impute it to me, hinting that I was jealous of Chavigny's secret mission; he would say that I had sacrificed the Regent's dignity and that of my country to my wounded vanity, for, considering the manner in which I had been

treated in Spain, it could not be doubted that with a little good-will on my part Chavigny would have had a favourable reception. I asked Grimaldo, therefore, out of friendship for me, apart from all other considerations, not to put it into the Cardinal's power to do me a serious injury. Either this appeal touched him, or he had made his own reflections, for he promised to see Chavigny himself and to do what he could to obtain permission for me to present him to the King, but he thought it very doubtful whether he would succeed. This was immediately after the return from Lerma; he had a bad cold, and for more than a week afterwards he was confined to his room and could see nobody.

On the 16th of January Chavigny arrived, and he came to see me next morning. He brought a letter of credit from the Duke of Parma, and the ostensible object of his mission was to obtain the King of Spain's consent to an arrangement by which the Pope should pay for certain territories belonging to Parma, but actually in his possession, by granting an indult on the revenues of the clergy in the Spanish Indies. He launched out into a eulogium of the Duke of Parma, his wisdom and ability, and the high consideration he enjoyed throughout Italy; above all he commended his unvarying attachment to French interests, which had exposed him to much ill-treatment on the part of the Emperor. I asked, as if simply seeking for information, what part the Duke of Parma had taken in the business of the double marriage. Chavigny replied without hesitation that he had really been the prime mover in the affair throughout. I received this information without moving a muscle, but in reality I knew a good deal more about it than Chavigny did; the Duke of Orleans and Cardinal Dubois had both told me, separately, that the Duke of Parma had been kept entirely in the dark from first to last, and that when the announcement of the double marriage was published it came upon him as a very unpleasant surprise.

I discovered before long that the real object of Chavigny's mission was to induce their Catholic Majesties to send the Infant Don Carlos, who was only six years old, to Italy, where he was to be entrusted to the care of the Duke of Parma, with a view to his succeeding to the Duchy; and an escort of six thousand men was to be sent with him, to be

under the command of the Duke of Parma. I did not at all approve of this scheme, for many reasons; it was supported chiefly by the Italian cabal in the Spanish Court whose object was to overthrow Grimaldo. Their Catholic Majesties were for a time inclined to favour it, and orders were given for ten men-of-war to be got ready to sail from Barcelona about the end of May; these orders were carried out in a very foolish way, with a great deal of fuss and unnecessary expenditure. Before long, however, Grimaldo informed me that he had succeeded in convincing the King and Queen that the project was futile and mischievous; a task much facilitated by their displeasure at the arrival of Chavigny, whose past adventures were well known to them. He had, however, with infinite difficulty, prevailed upon them to allow me to present him to them; but it was only for my sake, to prevent any unpleasantness between Cardinal Dubois and myself.

The day following this conversation I took Chavigny to see Grimaldo, who received him with cold civility. In the evening, when their Majesties returned from shooting, I presented Chavigny to them at the door of their private apartments. The King passed on without a word, without even a glance in our direction; the Queen stopped and said a word or two to me, but only to me; she took not the slightest notice of Chavigny. Although I had expected an ungracious reception, this slight was so marked that I felt quite confounded; even Chavigny, with all his mild effrontery, seemed rather embarrassed. As this scene took place in public, it became the talk of the Court and town; Chavigny naturally did not talk of it, no more did I; but for several days he seemed deeply mortified. Having thus presented him, I left him to his own devices, and did not interfere with his business. He failed in both the objects of his mission; nevertheless, he remained at Madrid for two months after my own departure. I do not know whether the Italian cabal kept him in hopes of winning over the Queen to their project about Don Carlos, or whether Cardinal Dubois had entrusted him with some other business which he considered too difficult for Maulevrier. In either case his prolonged stay had no perceptible result.

I had the misfortune to fail in two matters which I had very much at heart. It will be remembered that when Cardinal Dubois, for his own selfish interests, induced the

Duke of Orleans to enter into the foolish war with Spain, the Duke of Berwick without hesitation accepted the command of the French army, and proceeded to take Spanish towns and to destroy Spanish ships and dockyards. The King of Spain, who had loaded the Duke of Berwick with favours, had never forgiven this conduct, which he naturally resented as gross ingratitude. Both the Duke of Orleans and Cardinal Dubois told me before my departure to do all I could to obtain the restoration of the Duke of Berwick to the King's good graces, and I had received several urgent letters on the subject since my arrival. I was particularly anxious to succeed on account of the many friendly services which I had received from the Duke of Berwick himself, and from his son the Duke de Liria.

I spoke to Grimaldo about it; he said nobody could wish me success more cordially than he did, for his attachment to the Duke of Berwick was of old standing; but I must not deceive myself; their Majesties' anger was as strong as ever; indeed, they showed it from time to time in such a marked way that he, who knew them well, would not dare to mention the subject to them. With this caution, he said, he must leave it to me to do as I pleased, but I should do well to bear it in mind. This was not a promising start; I had hoped that Grimaldo, as a friend of both father and son, would pave the way for me and smooth away all difficulties.

Then I went to Father d'Aubenton, but with no better success; I appealed in vain to his conscience as the King's confessor; he said that, although he was willing enough to befriend the Duke of Berwick, the affair was to a certain extent a question of public policy, and he could not touch upon it unless the King asked his opinion. He warned me of the difficulties in my way, and advised me to consult Grimaldo; for I had not mentioned my visit to him. I did go back to him, and told him that I had considered the matter, and thought myself bound to carry out my instructions; I did not see how their Majesties could be angry with me for doing so, and of course I should approach them with the utmost possible respect. If the worst came to the worst, I added, I should have done my duty, and avoided putting myself in a false position by disobeying a precise and reiterated order.

I asked for an audience accordingly, at which I told their Majesties that I was instructed to ask a favour which the

King and the Duke of Orleans had very much at heart; they made their request relying confidently not only on their Majesties' generosity, but on their piety; and they would feel deeply grateful if it were granted at this moment of sincere reconciliation between their Majesties and themselves. They heard me out, and then the King asked what this favour was which the King and the Duke of Orleans desired so earnestly. I replied that it was the restoration of their favour to the Duke of Berwick, who was inconsolable at having forfeited it. At the mention of his name the King reddened, and said in a loud and firm voice: "God commands us to forgive, sir; but you must not ask more of me than that!" I hung my head, and, looking at the Queen as if to implore her assistance, replied: "Your Majesty closes my mouth; respect forbids me to say more; yet I still retain some hope, trusting to your Majesty's generosity and religious feeling." I said no more, for I saw that to persevere would only irritate them. After a short silence the Queen began talking about something else, and after a brief conversation my audience terminated.

Grimaldo was not in the least surprised when I told him what had happened; it was only what he had predicted. The Duke de Liria was deeply grieved, though personally he was always well treated by their Majesties; both he and Grimaldo were of opinion that it would be useless to try again, and I quite agreed with them.

The second business in which I failed was one about which I had no orders from my Court. By the marriage of the Duke de Beauvilliers' daughter nearly all his fortune had passed to his son-in-law, the Duke de Mortemart, who also inherited his title of Grandee of Spain. The Duchess de Beauvilliers, who had long since repented of her share in promoting this marriage, was grieved to see this dignity pass out of her husband's family; and shortly before my departure for Spain she asked me to see whether I could not obtain a Grandeeship for the Duke de St. Aignan, her late husband's half-brother. I had the greatest respect and affection for Madame de Beauvilliers, and her husband's memory was very dear to me; and I readily promised to do what I could, although St. Aignan himself had never cultivated my acquaintance except when he thought I could be useful to him; and I rather disliked him as a futile sort of person.

I spoke to Grimaldo on the subject, but his reply was not encouraging; he said I should find their Majesties strongly prejudiced against the Duke de St. Aignan; partly because Cardinal Alberoni had set them against him, and partly because of his own foolish behaviour while ambassador at Madrid; among other things, he used to spend an inordinate time over his toilet, and had frequently kept their Majesties waiting for his audience. I asked him to prepare their minds for my request, but he said that would spoil all; if there was any chance whatever of success it lay in taking them by surprise, when perhaps they would not like to refuse me to my face.

This seemed reasonable, so I looked out for an opportunity of speaking to their Majesties when they seemed to be in good-humour. I flattered myself that they regarded me rather favourably just then, for they had consulted me several times in private about the behaviour of the Princess of the Asturias, to which I shall refer presently. I was the more hopeful of success because the Duchess de Beauvilliers was the only person about our Court whom the King had asked after. So I chose a moment when I was alone with their Majesties to turn the conversation to the King's younger days, and thence to the subject of M. and Madame de Beauvilliers; telling him of the death of their two sons, and how the dignity of Grandee of Spain had passed out of their family to the Duke de Mortemart. I stopped to see whether this exordium would arouse the King's interest; as he kept silence, I proceeded to say that it would be a generous favour and a mark of his old esteem for the Duke and Duchess de Beauvilliers if he were to make the Duke de St. Aignan a Grandee, and so restore that dignity to the family on which he had originally conferred it. I added that I had already received favours from him beyond my utmost expectation, and certainly could not venture to ask for more; nevertheless, I would confess that if he granted this request I should regard it as a boon not inferior to any already conferred on me. While I was saying this I noticed the King fidgeting about with his feet, as he always did when he wished to put an end to an audience; when I had finished, instead of answering, he gave the Queen's dress a pull; this was a signal for her to dismiss me, which she did very politely a few moments later.

Grimaldo was not surprised when I told him what had

happened ; I would not ask him directly to intercede for me, but I spoke so pathetically to him about my disappointment at finding the King so coldly disposed towards the family of his former governor that he offered of his own accord to tell the King how grieved I had seemed after my audience, and put in a word, if possible, for the Duke de St. Aignan. He did so twice ; but on the second occasion the King replied that, considering all he had already done for me, he thought I ought to be satisfied. Grimaldo therefore begged me, as a friend, not to render myself disagreeable to their Majesties by teasing them about a request which they would certainly not grant. I myself saw that it was useless, and, though my heart was still set on this favour, I desisted from further efforts to attain it.

CHAPTER XXIV

1722

The little Princess of the Asturias is ill-tempered—I counsel the King and Queen not to spoil her—She refuses to attend the ball—Public festivities in honour of the double marriage—The Spanish Court at Buen-Retiro—I visit Toledo—Miracles and the Hall of the Councils—My disgust—Pimental and my dilemma—Aranjuez—Reception of my eldest son as a Knight of the Golden Fleece—My dinner-party to celebrate the event.

As the convalescence of the Princess advanced she began to show signs of ill-temper. After all the affectionate care and attention shown to her by the Queen during her illness, she obstinately refused to go near Her Majesty ; she would not leave her own room, where she amused herself by looking out of the window ; to those who saw her there she seemed to be in good health. She paid no attention either to the prescriptions of her doctors or to the advice of her ladies about her behaviour ; the Queen herself received snappish answers when she tried to bring her to reason by gentle remonstrances. The Queen spoke to me about it ; she even asked me to see the Princess and try to make her more tractable. I said I was deeply grieved by what I heard, but I could not flatter myself that I should succeed where Her Majesty had failed ; after a little conversation I took the liberty of telling Her Majesty that she was spoiling the Princess, treating her too kindly and paying too much attention to her whims ; it was high time, I said, that she should be made to submit to the duties of her position ; and I added that, if consideration for the Duke of Orleans' feelings had anything to do with Her Majesty's forbearance, I could answer for it that, far from resenting the sharp language which she might think proper to address to the Princess, he would on the contrary feel extremely obliged to her.

This speech of mine was well received ; after a little more

conversation I received a positive order to see the Princess often, and speak to her. The Duchess de Monteillano and her other ladies had also urged me to do so, for her obstinacy in keeping to her room was causing some discontent, because the festivities to which people were looking forward were suspended in consequence. So I went to see her two or three times, but never succeeded in getting a word out of her except a curt "yes" or "no" to my inquiries about her health, and not always that. Then I took to saying to her ladies in her presence things that were really addressed to her; they replied in the same way; and so the Princess had to listen to what was really a lesson; but she never paid the slightest apparent attention. She did, however, go to see the Queen once or twice, but rather sulkily and in *déshabillé*.

In the meantime all preparations were made for the great ball in the Hall of the Grandees, and the King and Queen were looking forward to it impatiently, for, as I have already observed, they both liked dancing; nothing was wanting but the Princess's consent to attend it, which she obstinately refused to give. I was again asked to see her; and I entered into a conversation with her ladies about her health, which I hoped would soon be good enough to enable the ball to come off. I said it would be a beautiful sight, and a pleasure just suited to a Princess of her age; the King and Queen, I added, were looking forward impatiently to seeing her there. I was not addressing her, but all of a sudden she cried out, just like one of those children who are falling into a consumption, "I go there, indeed! I am certainly not going!" "Very well, Madame," I said, "you are not going; that is settled; but you will be sorry for it afterwards. You will deprive yourself of an amusement where the whole Court hopes to see you; and you have so many reasons for wishing to please the King and Queen, that you will be sorry to have missed this opportunity of doing so."

Up to this time she had been sitting looking another way; now she suddenly turned to me and said, in the most determined voice I ever heard: "No, sir, I repeat it, I am not going to the ball; the King and Queen can go there if they choose. They like balls; I do not. They like to keep late hours; I like going to bed early. Let them please themselves, and I will do the same!" I pretended to take this as a joke, and went on conversing with the ladies in the same

strain; but the Princess took absolutely no notice of us. When I went out the Duchesses de Monteillano and de Liria followed me, and expressed their alarm at such obstinacy and self-will in a child of the Princess's age; in a strange country, too, with not a person about her whom she knew. I was even more alarmed than they were, but I tried to make the best of it, telling them that probably she had not quite shaken off her illness.

I did not report this interview fully to their Majesties; but, as they began talking about the ball, and the King expressed himself rather bitterly about the Princess's behaviour, I took the liberty of saying that surely he would not alter his arrangements and disappoint his Court on account of a childish whim which probably arose from ill-health; and I added that, for my own part, I should be much disappointed if the ball did not take place, for I had been looking forward to it. "Oh!" said the King, "we cannot have the ball without the Princess." "Why not, Sire?" I said. "This is a ball given by Your Majesty as a sign of your rejoicing. It is true that it is partly in honour of the Princess, but it is not for her to settle what entertainments Your Majesty is to give to your Court. If she thinks she is well enough she will come to the ball; if not, it can go on without her."

While I was speaking the Queen made me signs of approval, as if she wished me to press the King; so I went on to say that, since His Majesty did me the honour of taking me into his confidence with regard to the Princess, I thought it my duty to submit that it was undesirable to let her think herself of too great importance; and it would be a useful lesson for her, one, indeed, essential to her education, to let her see from the outset that they could do very well without her. The Queen backed me up strongly in this, but, as the King made no reply, she changed the conversation. When I took my leave she took the opportunity of the King's back being turned to make signs that I was not to let myself be discouraged; so I took another opportunity that afternoon to ask the Queen when the ball was to be, confessing that I was looking forward to it eagerly. She said I must speak to the King, and asked him if he had heard what I said; to which he replied, "We will see about it."

Next day I had another conversation with them, in the course of which they spoke of the Princess's sulky temper and her rudeness, not only to her ladies, but to themselves.

I took the liberty of reminding them that I had already warned them that they were spoiling her, and said I trusted they would forgive me if I now told them that they themselves were more to blame than a naughty child who did not know what she was doing. Instead of giving way to all her whims through an excess of kindness, I said, it was most important that they should repress them firmly, and teach her to treat them with respect, and her ladies with courtesy. I added that if they continued to spoil her they would regret it bitterly when too late; and that if the Duke of Orleans had the privilege of talking to them which I enjoyed, I was sure he would tell them exactly the same thing, only he would put them much more forcibly, as his position entitled him to do. They took all this very well, and after some further conversation I retired; telling their Majesties that I would not see the Princess any more, because I saw that it was perfectly useless.

I did not mention the ball again for a day or two, for fear of wearying the King; at last, as they were just going out shooting, the Queen called me to her and said: "It is settled; there is to be no ball, but to make up for it the King will give a small dance this evening, confined to members of his household; and he wishes to see you there." I bowed and thanked her, whereupon she said, "You will come, will not you?" I replied suitably to this honour; the King then said, "It will be quite among ourselves"; to which the Queen added: "And we shall be able to dance and enjoy ourselves at our ease!"

This dance took place in the small interior gallery; the Prince of the Asturias enjoyed himself immensely; every one danced many minuets and country-dances; and it was kept up till three in the morning. It was on this occasion that I had an opportunity of handling and examining the famous pearl known as the Peregrine, which the King wore in his hat. It is of exactly the size and shape of those little pears which come in just when the strawberries are nearly over, and is certainly much the largest and most beautiful pearl in existence. It is said to have formed one of Cleopatra's earrings, and to be the fellow of that which Mark Antony dissolved in vinegar and gave her to drink. Although the apartments of the Princess opened into the small gallery, she did not show herself for an instant. My warnings to their Catholic Majesties were only too well justified; the

behaviour of the Princess throughout her career in Spain was most extraordinary in every way, except that she never indulged in gallantry; and the short remainder of her life after her return to France as a childless widow was enough to enlighten people here as to her character.

The public festivities in honour of the double marriage began on the 15th of February with a display of fireworks in the open space before the palace, which lasted over an hour. There was a constant succession of set pieces representing landscapes, hunting scenes, castles, and fortifications; innumerable rockets; rivers and cascades of fire; constant variety, in short, and in such abundance that the eye could not take it in; yet one was never tired of watching; the finest displays of fireworks I ever saw in France were nothing in comparison. This was followed a few evenings later by a magnificent display of horsemanship in the Place Major, which was brilliantly illuminated. The Duke de Medina-Cœli, the Duke del Arco, and the Corregidor of Madrid, splendidly mounted and covered with jewels, each commanded a squadron of two hundred and fifty men, who went through a variety of evolutions. One of the most striking displays was that of the brigade crossing the full width of the square, two at a time, at full gallop, till they arrived under the King's windows, when they suddenly stopped, pulling their horses back on to their haunches, each man carrying a huge lighted candle. Not a man failed in this performance, which is of extraordinary difficulty; for the horses have to be kept flank to flank and halted at exactly the same instant; while the candles and the men's bodies are held perfectly upright. As each pair of horsemen arrived at the end of their course another started; and so they gradually fell into their places in line under the King's balcony. This, like all the evolutions, was performed in perfect silence, which added greatly to the effect.

The Place Major was again illuminated on a subsequent evening, the performance on this occasion being a representation of a sea-fight between a Turkish vessel and a Maltese galley, which lasted two hours, the Turkish ship being eventually burnt. The whole scene was most realistic; the water was most cleverly represented, and the ships, properly rigged and fitted out down to the smallest details, moved so easily and naturally that one could hardly believe that the battle was not real; first one ship, then the other,

seemed to have the best of it, and one watched it from first to last with intense interest. A light wind favoured the spectators by blowing away the smoke of the guns. The scene of the boarding of the Turkish vessel was marvellously acted; the boarders were repelled several times, but came on again; victory was doubtful to the very last.

Lent put a stop to these festivities, and their Catholic Majesties quitted the palace for that of Buen-Retiro. All books on Spain describe this palace, so I will content myself with saying that to my mind it is more magnificent than the palace of Madrid, and much more agreeable. It greatly resembles the palace of the Luxembourg at Paris in its general appearance and the arrangement of its terraces and fountains; it has a park which would be admirable if the trees grew better; and here is the extensive Mall to which I have already alluded. At this season, which is usually fine in Spain, the King played Mall every day, and I used generally to pay my respects by following him.

One day, happening to notice the Queen take snuff several times, I remarked that it was rather extraordinary to see a King of Spain who indulged in neither snuff nor chocolate. The King replied that it was true he did not take snuff; whereupon the Queen made a sort of apology for using it, saying that, to please the King, she had tried to break herself of the habit, but had not succeeded in doing so. The King added that, as for chocolate, he did drink it in the morning with the Queen, but only on fast-days. "What, Sir!" I said. "Chocolate on fast-days?" "Certainly," said the King, with great gravity. "Chocolate does not violate a fast." "But, Sir," I said, "it is food, and very pleasant, nourishing food too." "And I tell you," said the King sharply, and turning rather red, "that one can take it without breaking one's fast; the Jesuits told me so, and they take it themselves every fast-day; it is true that they do not soak bread in it, as they do on other days." I held my tongue at once; it was not my business to teach him how to observe a fast-day; but I could not help admiring the instructions given by these good fathers. From the most petty observances up to the highest knowledge of religion and the precepts of the Gospel, in what profound darkness do those Kings live contentedly who submit themselves to their guidance!

While the Court was at the Retiro I obtained permission

View of the Bassin de St. Cloud.

to inspect the palace at Madrid, accompanied by Don Gaspard Giron, who was kind enough to take me all over it. I said to him that I feared his politeness would make me miss one thing which I was particularly anxious to see. The good man understood me quite well, for he was witty and acute, but his Spanish courtesy made him turn a deaf ear. He kept on assuring me that I should miss nothing. "I will bet you I do, Señor Don Gaspard," said I. "What about the prison of Francis I?" "Oh, for shame, for shame! Señor Duque," he said. "What a thing to talk about!" and he changed the subject, taking me to see something else. But I stuck to my point, and after many apologies he conducted me to the prison. We had to climb a very long and steep staircase till we reached the upper story of a tower two hundred feet high; it contained two rooms, the outer of which was used as a guard-room while Francis I was there. A door from this opened into his prison, which has no other exit. The cell is large enough to contain a bed and a few tables and chairs; it is lighted by a large window, strongly barred, giving a view of the Mançanarez and the country beyond. Such is the place where Francis I was so long confined, and where he fell so ill that Charles V, fearing lest death should rob him of the advantages he hoped to derive from the retention of his illustrious captive, was forced at last to treat him with more humanity.

At this time I also made an expedition to Toledo, which took five days. As soon as I knew I was to go to Spain I made up my mind to visit this place, for several reasons: I wished to see its superb cathedral; the hall where the Councils of Toledo had assembled, so famous for the learning and piety of the assembled Fathers of the Church; I also wished to hear Mass celebrated according to the ritual known as the "Mosarabic," which is practised only at Toledo. This liturgy, which is in Latin, differs in some respects from the ordinary ritual; it is very ancient, for it was certainly used before the conquest of a great part of Spain by the Moors early in the eighth century. I had become rather intimate with the Archbishop of Toledo, and he kindly made all arrangements for me, and asked me to stay at his house. I took with me my sons, and the principal members of my suite.

On arriving at the gates of the town I was taken at once to the Franciscan monastery where the Councils were held. Here I was received by the principal officers of the monastery

and conducted into the church, a very mean-looking building. I had hardly crossed the threshold when they stopped me, asking whether I did not see something very remarkable. I saw that over the high altar, instead of a picture, was a crucifix, life-size, the figure wearing a wig and a pair of drawers; but as they are nearly all like that in Spain I saw nothing remarkable about it. As I was casting my eyes round, to find out what it was that they wished me to admire, "The arms, look at the arms," said the monk; and I then perceived that while one of them was attached to the cross as usual, the other hung down by the side of the image. I asked the reason, and was told, in a very grave and devout tone, that I beheld a standing miracle. It seems that long ago a rich young man of the town had seduced a girl under promise of marriage, which promise he afterwards denied. The girl's parents, having no proofs of the promise, challenged him to leave it to this crucifix; he accepted, and went to the church with the girl, followed by a crowd of people. They had no sooner presented themselves before the crucifix than the left arm detached itself spontaneously from the cross, and gently assumed its present position. This was hailed as a miracle, and the young man married the girl. Although as an Ambassador I had nothing to fear from the Inquisition, I did not wish to give offence in a country so completely under the influence of superstition, so I listened quite gravely to this pious story.

Then the monks took me to all the chapels in succession, and each had a special miracle of its own. I kept on asking them to conduct me to the Hall of the Councils, or what remained of it, as that was the special object of my visit; and they would reply: "We will go there directly, but you must see this next chapel; it is very remarkable." So I had to go and listen to more miracles, though my interest in them was decidedly flagging. At last, when we had made the round of all the chapels, they coolly informed me that the Hall of the Councils was no longer in existence; they had destroyed the last remains of it five or six months previously to make way for new kitchens! I was so angry that it was with great difficulty I refrained from striking them as hard as I could; I reproached them bitterly for their almost sacrilegious act of vandalism, and, turning my back on them, regained my carriage without a word of civility. Thus it is that the most precious monuments of antiquity are de-

stroyed through ignorance or greed, and neither the Government nor any one else ever takes the trouble to protest.

I then went to the Archbishop's house, where I was received by his two nephews, Canons of the cathedral; the younger one seemed clever and polite. We conversed in Latin; at first the elder nephew thought I was speaking a language unknown to him, and begged me to talk Latin! The fact is, our pronunciation of the language is quite different from that of other nations; however, he soon managed to understand me. They were extremely civil and attentive, without ever forcing themselves upon us. We were waited upon by the Archbishop's own servants, whom he had sent over expressly. Our fare was abundant, after the Spanish fashion, but not very good, for in the Castilles those who keep Lent strictly have a bad time of it. Owing to the remoteness of the coast, sea-fish is unknown; the big rivers have few fish, and the small ones none at all, for they are mere torrents. Butter and milk are almost unprocurable; vegetables are scarce, except garlic, onions, cardoons, and a few herbs. There is fish preserved in oil, which would be good if the oil were better, but it is so bad as a rule that in Lent the streets of Madrid reek of it. One is therefore reduced to eggs, cooked in many ways, and to chocolate, which is the great resource of the Spaniards. The only sea-fish eaten at Madrid is the *vesugo*; it comes into season about Christmas, and is brought from Bilbao; in appearance and flavour it is something between a mackerel and a shad. It is an excellent fish, and one never gets tired of it; unfortunately, quite at the beginning of Lent it goes out of season, and will not keep. So our fare at Toledo, though plentiful, was not appetising; it was, however, the best they could give us.

Next morning I went to see the cathedral, where by the express orders of the Archbishop Mass according to the Mosarabic ritual was celebrated, although it was Lent, with as much ceremony as on Easter Sunday. I heard it with the greatest interest; it lasts a little longer than an ordinary High Mass. After an inspection of the church and its curiosities I returned to the Archiepiscopal residence; and shortly afterwards two Canons were announced, who had come to offer me the compliments of the Chapter. I was informed that one of them was a Pimentel, of one of the greatest families in Spain, and that his companion was also

a man of quality with a prebend worth 60,000 livres a year; these were Canons slightly superior to those we are accustomed to see in France! When they were announced, my room was already full of people; for the town authorities had also come to salute me, and all the members of my suite were present, besides the Archbishop's nephews and the principal officers of his household.

I advanced to meet the two Canons, and caused two chairs to be placed for them side by side, while I took one facing them; all the rest had to stand, there was no room for them to sit down. I took off my hat, intending to thank them for coming; but, before I had time to say a word Pimentel rose, took off his hat with a bow, and began: "Domine!" then, reassuming his seat and putting on his hat, he proceeded to make me a speech in very good Latin which lasted quite a quarter of an hour. I was very much taken aback, and quite puzzled what to do; I must reply to him, but how could I do so in French, which he did not understand! and yet, could I manage it in Latin? I made up my mind to risk it; so I listened with all my ears, and noted the heads of his discourse, in order to say something about each. At last he ended with a bow; and, looking round, I caught sight of my young companions chuckling over what they supposed, quite rightly, to be my embarrassment. However, I rose, took off my hat, and said: "Domine!" As I resumed my seat and began my oration I cast another glance at my young friends; they seemed stupefied at my audacity, which they had not expected. I trotted out my Latin as well as I could; dog-Latin it was, and full of blunders, no doubt; still I went on without coming to a standstill; and managed at the end to bring in some compliments to the Chapter, especially to Pimentel himself, alluding to his distinguished birth and his contempt for worldly honours, as evinced by his refusal of two rich Archbishoprics. My speech lasted about as long as Pimentel's; the young men seemed quite flabbergasted at my success in getting out of my scrape. After a pause the two Canons took their leave, and I accompanied them as far as the end of the next room; when I returned the Archbishop's nephews and other spectators greeted me with congratulations on my skill in the Latin language. I daresay they did not mean all they said, but after all I had got out of my difficulty pretty well.

From Toledo I went to Aranjuez, where I was lodged in the house of the Governor, who was absent. This is the only place in the two Castilles where trees grow well ; every approach to the town is through a fine avenue two or three miles in length, many of them having four rows of trees. The *château* is very extensive, with fine large rooms ; it has a large garden, surrounded by the Tagus, which is here a narrow stream, too shallow for boats. This garden was laid out by Charles V in the old Flemish style ; there are all sorts of curiosities in the shape of artificial trees with birds perched in them, which let fall showers of water when one walks underneath ; water also squirts out from the statues and from the mouths of animals, so that an unwary visitor finds himself drenched without possibility of escape. To any one accustomed to the beautiful gardens laid out by Le Nôtre, all this seems trivial and in bad taste ; nevertheless, in Castille these gardens appear charming ; they are so green and shady, and so well watered. One thing rather marred them, in my opinion ; there is a mill within a hundred yards which shuts out the view of the Tagus, and makes a continual noise which is heard a long way off. There is a park well stocked with deer and wild pigs ; also an establishment for breeding camels and buffaloes.

As I was going out in the morning a fine camel was led up to me, which knelt down to be relieved of its burden ; this was a present of vegetables, eggs, and fish. Among the latter were several fine barbel, some three feet long ; but, on tasting them, I found them no better than the barbel we are accustomed to in France ; as usual, they were soft, insipid, and full of small bones. I stayed a whole day at Aranjuez, where I was entertained at the King's expense. It seemed charming as a spring residence, and I should have thought it would be delicious in summer ; unfortunately, it is very unhealthy at that season, and even the inhabitants of the village leave it for fear of the dangerous fever which prevails. The Court only goes there for six weeks or so in the spring, and seldom returns in the autumn.

When I got back to Madrid the King and Queen asked me how I liked Aranjuez. I praised it highly, as indeed it deserved, but I happened to mention the mill ; saying I wondered how they could tolerate it so near, for, besides being an eyesore and shutting out the view, the noise it made was very unpleasant. The King did not like this

at all; he said the mill had always been there, and he saw no harm in it. I hastened to turn the conversation to more agreeable topics connected with Aranjuez.

The health of my eldest son was still precarious, and he was impatient to leave a country where he had never been well. The ceremony of his reception as a Knight of the Golden Fleece had hitherto been deferred, partly on account of his own health, partly on that of the Princess of the Asturias, who wished to see it. As there was no further reason for delay, it was arranged that it should take place immediately. On the day appointed the Duke de Liria and the Prince de Masseran, who were to act as my son's sponsors, came to fetch us in a carriage drawn by four superb Neapolitan horses, and we got in; the two Spaniards, in spite of our remonstrances, taking the back seat. Unfortunately, the horses absolutely refused to start; whipping was useless, they did nothing but kick, rear, and plunge, very nearly upsetting us several times. As time was flying I begged the Duke de Liria to use my own carriage, so as not to keep the King waiting, but he would not hear of it; at last, after about half an hour, the horses kindly consented to go on. The whole of my suite followed us in other carriages, as when I went to my first audience; for I wished the Spaniards to see how highly I appreciated the King's favours. When we had gone about half the distance the horses again began jibbing, and went through the same performance; fortunately, it did not last so long this time, but before we got off a message came from the King to say that he was waiting.

At last we arrived, and the King went at once into the room where the Chapter was assembled. In one corner behind the King's chair, were the Queen, the Princess of the Asturias, the Infanta, and the members of their suite; in the corresponding corner at the other side seats were placed for myself and about twenty other noblemen. The Chapter is private, and all spectators, including the Queen, are supposed not to be there; so I made no bows except one to the Queen, who was kind enough to make me signs of congratulation. All being in their places, the doors were closed, my son remaining outside. The King then briefly proposed that the Vidame de Chartres should be admitted to the Order; whereupon all the Knights took off their hats, and bowed without rising. After a few

moments' silence the King called the Duke de Liria, and said, "Go and see whether the Vidame de Chartres is anywhere about." The Duke left the room and remained outside for seven or eight minutes, because the new Knight is supposed to know nothing of the honour in store for him, and to be in the building only by chance; so time has to be allowed to search for him. At last the Duke de Liria came back and reported that the Vidame was in the next room; whereupon the King ordered him to return and ask the candidate whether he was willing to take an oath binding him to obey the statutes of the Order, and to bear himself on all occasions as a good, brave, and loyal Knight. He returned immediately, and reported that the Vidame was willing to do so. "Then bring him in," said the King; and the Duke de Liria again left the room, returning with my son on his left hand. He led him up to the King, who proceeded to administer sundry oaths to him as he knelt at his feet; this took rather a long time. Then the Duke del Arco, followed by Valouse, the first equerry, marched slowly round the hall, bearing the sword of the Great Captain,[1] Don Gonsalvo de Cordoba, who is always so styled. Having completed the circuit, they knelt before the King, and at a signal from him drew the sword from its scabbard and presented it, first kissing the hilt. The King also kissed it; then, holding it in both hands, tapped my son three times on the shoulders, alternately, saying as he did so: "In the names of St. George and St. Andrew I dub thee Knight." As the sword is extremely heavy, the taps were rather severe. Then the King returned the sword to the Duke del Arco, who kissed and sheathed it, and carried it back with the same ceremony.

I had an opportunity of examining this sword, which I did with much interest; it is over four feet in length, and the blade at the hilt is of the width of four fingers at least, tapering down to a fine point. I could not raise it in the air with one hand, and it was as much as I could do to wield it with both; yet they say it is the same sword which the Great Captain used habitually, with which he won so many victories. I wondered at the strength of men in those times, but no doubt constant practice from their youth up

[1] Don Gonsalvo de Cordoba (1453–1515) was a famous general in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. He took part, in a subordinate capacity, in the expulsion of the Moors from Spain; and afterwards commanded the Spanish armies in Italy and elsewhere.

had a good deal to do with it. I was also touched by the honour shown to the memory of this great man, in making his sword the sword of State, which even the King never handles without marks of respect.

The King then proceeded to give my son the formal embrace, and invested him with the collar and jewel of the Order; after which he was led up to each Knight in turn, beginning with the Prince of the Asturias, and embraced by each. He then took his place with the rest. The King remained seated during the space of a long *credo*; he then rose and retired to his own rooms. I had warned my son to hasten forward so as to be at the door before the King reached it, and he was there in time to kiss his hand and thank him. I was also there, and we were joined by the Queen, who said some very gracious things to us both. When their Majesties had retired we returned home, where I gave, according to custom, a great dinner to all the Knights. They nearly all came, besides a number of other noblemen; even the Duke d'Albuquerque, who had declined my invitation to the dinner I gave to the Grandees on the plea of ill-health, said he could not do so a second time, if I would excuse his eating nothing but soup. He partook of six different kinds of soup, rather plentifully of each; but the rest of his repast consisted of slips of bread, which he dipped in the sauce of the dishes, and he only ate the tip of them. The dinner, though the guests were so numerous, was very cheerful. I have already mentioned that the Spaniards, though usually so temperate, ate quite as much as we did at my dinners; but they drank very little. Two days later my son returned to France with the Abbé de Mathan, who kindly consented to accompany him. They took the Escurial on their way, as they had not yet seen it, but they were not admitted to the Putridero; the monks were still angry at the remarks I had made about Don Carlos, and revenged themselves in this way.

On the 9th of March the King and Queen departed with a very small suite for Balsäim, intending to remain there four days. As I meant to take my leave of them on their return, I began on the same day to pay my numerous farewell visits; but I had hardly begun to do so when I was informed that a courier had arrived from Paris bringing me important despatches, and I was forced to return to my house at once.

CHAPTER XXV

1722

Letter from Dubois—He reports supposed cabals at the French Court—I see through his intrigues and consult Grimaldo as to the possibility of an interview with the King of Spain—I arrive at Balsäim—My audience—Segovia—La Granja—Bannière—My letters to Dubois at Belleisle—An absurd report—My farewells—My audience with the Princess of the Asturias—Maulevrier is made a Knight of the Golden Fleece and receives a severe snub.

I FOUND an immense mass of correspondence awaiting me, but nothing to justify the despatch of a special courier till I came to a letter from Cardinal Dubois, relating to an affair which requires a little explanation. He had for some time been keeping Cardinal de Rohan in good humour by holding out hopes that he would be declared Prime Minister; he had, indeed, gone so far as to promise it in so many words; and Cardinal de Rohan, who was silly enough to believe him, had announced the fact to the Pope and several Cardinals before he left Rome. The subject soon became a matter of public gossip there, but people at Rome were not quite so credulous as the Cardinal himself. Dubois, though the whole government was practically in his hands, had modestly refrained from attending the Council of Regency since his elevation to the Cardinalate, for he knew there would be disputes about his precedence there which he did not feel himself strong enough to encounter.

When Rohan returned from Rome, Dubois told him that, before becoming Prime Minister, he ought to have held some subordinate post, and advised him to ask the Regent to give him a place, in the first instance, in the Council of Regency. He meant to make Rohan the champion of the Cardinalate instead of himself; he knew he could get rid of him when he had served his purpose; and in this way he would escape the bitter personal attacks which he foresaw would be made upon himself, but to which Rohan was not liable. As, I am thankful to say, I was at a distance

of three hundred leagues from the scene. I will not describe what happened; suffice it to say that, as usual, the Dukes got the worst of the contest, and those who were members of the Council of Regency ceased to attend its meetings, together with the Chancellor. But, oddly enough, the Marshals of France also ceased to attend, though up to that time they had never thought of denying that Cardinals were entitled to precedence over them. This was a false step, and Dubois immediately took advantage of it to persuade the Regent that the question of precedence was merely a pretext, and that he had in reality to deal with a cabal hostile to himself and his government.

Dubois wrote me a long letter, or rather two letters, on the subject. He began by saying that if the question of precedence between Dukes and Cardinals had been the real point at issue he would have been glad enough that I was out of the way; but, as a matter of fact, there was a regularly organised cabal, led by the Duke de Noailles, the object of which was to weaken, if not to overthrow, the Regent's government; and, as a preliminary measure, to annul the King's marriage-contract and send the Infanta back to Spain. Under these circumstances, he said, he deeply regretted my absence, which prevented me from standing up for the Duke of Orleans with my accustomed zeal and courage; in spite of this, however, he thought it highly desirable that I should remain at Madrid for some time longer. I could not be spared from my present duties, he said, unless I could contrive to smooth the way for Chavigny to take my place; and that, he was informed, would be no easy matter, owing to the unfounded prejudice against him entertained at the Spanish Court. In the meantime, on receipt of his letter I was to see their Catholic Majesties without a moment's delay, wherever they might happen to be; inform them of its contents, especially of the design to send back the Infanta, and reassure them to the best of my ability.

I also received a long letter from Bellisle to the same effect; he described the dispute about precedence in greater detail, and also the scene in the Council when those who considered themselves aggrieved took their departure, which he called taking off their mask. He said a cabal undoubtedly existed, the real chiefs of which were the Duke de Noailles and Canillac, though Marshal de Villeroy

imagined that he was the leader; and the Chancellor had been drawn into it by the influence of Noailles; its object, as disclosed by imprudent talk, was to deprive the Duke of Orleans of all influence in the government when the King should come of age, which would be in a few months, and the Infanta would then be sent back to Spain. Bellisle then proceeded to urge me to warn the King of Spain; to describe to him the real characters of the principal members of the cabal, especially of those most opposed to the King's marriage with the Infanta; and to assure him that the Duke of Orleans had taken a firm stand, and was in a better position than ever to be useful to their Catholic Majesties. He wound up by saying that the cabal was bent on overthrowing not only the Duke of Orleans, but all his personal friends, of whom I was the most intimate; and therefore for every reason I ought to co-operate with Cardinal Dubois in thwarting the designs of men who for the most part were my personal enemies.

I had no difficulty in seeing through all this. The fact is, Dubois was taking a hint from the Kings of England, who always discover a conspiracy ready to break out when they want to extract subsidies from their subjects, or maintain a larger number of troops than the House of Commons is disposed to grant. There were still certain persons whom he feared, because for various reasons they had some influence over his master. Among these were the Duke de Noailles, on account of his wit and cleverness, and the Duke of Orleans' old liking for him, which had never been entirely effaced; Marshals de Villeroy and d'Huxelles, who always had a certain ascendancy over the Regent, though he did not like them; Canillac, Nocé, and other subordinate personages,—all these he hoped to get rid of by including them in the supposed cabal. The Duke of Berwick and I were also on his list of proscribed persons, but he knew he would never succeed in making the Duke of Orleans suspect our fidelity. He meant to get rid of Berwick by sending him as Ambassador to Spain; that was why I received such precise and reiterated orders to effect a reconciliation, if possible, between him and their Catholic Majesties; we shall see that he was not discouraged by my failure. As for myself, I really do not know how he intended to proceed; we shall see, however, that I rendered him some useful services, though indignant at the absolute ascendancy

which the beast had acquired, and at my own powerlessness to influence the Duke of Orleans.

I read my letters over and over again, before making up my mind what to do. I did not mean to be Cardinal Dubois' dupe, and risk the reputation which I may venture to say I had acquired in Spain by talking of a cabal which a very short time would prove to be non-existent; at the same time, I would not give him a handle by disobeying his positive orders, so I resolved to force the barricades of Balsäim; for, after all, he would not be behind me there, to hear what I said. The first thing I did was to go to Grimaldo, whom I found at work in his office. I gave him a brief account of what had occurred in the Council, without mentioning anything about a cabal; merely saying that it was feared the desertion of so many important persons might produce an unduly strong impression on the minds of their Catholic Majesties; and to obviate this a special courier had been despatched to me with orders to explain the affair to them, without the loss of a moment.

Grimaldo laughed, and said there was no great hurry; their Catholic Majesties were not in the least inclined to meddle with disputes arising in the Court of France, and this affair would be a matter of perfect indifference to them; he strongly advised me, therefore, not to mention it till their return in four days. He reminded me that they had only started that morning for Balsäim; and that the order forbidding any one to follow them thither was without exception; adding that the King would certainly be embarrassed and displeased if he saw me arrive there. I told him in reply that I agreed with him entirely; but he knew the man I had to deal with. Cardinal Dubois would certainly make any delay on my part a pretext for a quarrel; he would impute it to the dissatisfaction which he knew I must feel at the precedence granted to the Cardinals. Thereupon I handed to him Dubois' private letter, which contained strict orders to see their Catholic Majesties without a moment's delay, wherever they might happen to be when the courier arrived. Grimaldo replied that he understood my embarrassment, and hardly knew what to say.

After a little more talk about Cardinal Dubois, I asked him to write to the King, explaining my position, and try to obtain a favourable reception for me; for, be the cou-

sequences what they might, I was determined to go to Balsäim next day; preferring the risk of displeasing the King in a matter of no great importance to that of affording Cardinal Dubois a pretext, of which he would certainly avail himself, to ruin me in my own Court. Grimaldo, with a shrug of his shoulders, admitted that I was right; adding that, fortunately, he had to send a courier to the King, and would take the opportunity to warn him of my intended journey, acquainting him with my personal motives for undertaking it, and do his best to secure me a tolerably gracious reception. I thanked him cordially, and returned home to arrange for relays of mules, in which Sartine was of great assistance to me.

I started next morning at six o'clock. To my great astonishment we found the gate of Madrid locked, and the man who had the key at a considerable distance outside; so that one of my footmen had to climb over the wall, which was fortunately not very high; and even then he had considerable difficulty in inducing the man to let us out of the town. My companions were my second son, the Count de Lorge, the Abbé de Saint-Simon, and his brother; together with the major of the latter's regiment. The Count de Céreste did not seem inclined to undertake this toilsome journey.

About noon, after a long drive over a steadily rising road, we reached the real foot of the Guadarrama mountains; where we left our carriages, and mounted our mules. I never saw a more picturesque road than that which lay before us, nor one more terrifying to traverse on wheels. It ascends the precipitous rocky side of a mountain, to a great height, by means of gently-sloping zigzags; so that it is possible, by raising the voice a little, to converse with a person above or below one, who is nearly three miles distant by road. The road, though smooth, is very narrow; yet the King and Queen always travel over it in a huge coach, the wheels of which, except here and there, are never more than an inch or two from the precipice. There are several places, indeed, where the wheels on one side are actually in the air; here bodies of peasants are stationed, who keep the vehicle balanced on the other wheels by means of long straps, at the imminent peril of their own lives as well as those of the people in the coach. The King and Queen are not in the least afraid, and nothing is ever done

to widen the road; but the Queen's women are terrified, though they travel in carriages purposely made extremely narrow. The men ride on mules.

When I made this ascent there was deep snow on the road, and the trees which grew in the clefts of the rocks were covered with hoar-frost, so that the view, though wild and terrifying, had a certain charm of its own. Arrived at the summit, we found a level road for a short distance; the descent is comparatively short and easy. When we were about half-way down we came in sight of Balsäim, situated in a narrow valley, at some distance from the foot of the mountains; it consists of the remains of a fine large castle, built by the Moors and destroyed by fire during the reign of Charles II. The remains are quite inconsiderable, and are surrounded by a garden of no great size.

We alighted at a low detached building, forming part of the old castle, and were shown into the offices of the Duke del Arco, where his servants were at work; they civilly left the room to us, after placing straw chairs for us near the fire, of which we stood greatly in need; they also offered us refreshments, which we declined. It was then only half-past four, and we had to wait an hour and a half for the return of their Majesties from La Granja. The room next to the one we were in was the Duke del Arco's kitchen; overhead were four little cells occupied by the three noblemen of the suite and by Valouse; and next to the kitchen was a small narrow room used by the Duke del Arco as a dining-room.

When the approach of their Majesties was announced we went out to meet them as they got out of their carriage; Grimaldo had warned them, and they were expecting to see us. The King's reception of us was cold, not to say sour; he said not a single word. The Queen's manner, though visibly embarrassed, was more humane; she addressed a few words to me; and their suite gave us a cordial welcome. The King and Queen ascended a wooden staircase with a rail on each side, so narrow that there was no room for two persons abreast; it was out-of-doors and leant against the gable-end, exactly like the entrance to a peasant's house in a village. At the top was a landing just large enough to hold five or six persons crowded together; on one side of this was their Majesties' bedroom; on the other a single room. These rooms formed their entire accommo-

dation, except a few garret-rooms overhead ; on the ground-floor were the kitchen and offices.

Their Majesties waited for me on the landing ; when I reached it I asked them to let me have the honour of speaking to them inside ; so they took me into the adjoining room, their suite remaining on the landing. They led me up to a window, for it was getting dark, and the King said testily, "Well, what is this urgent business ?" I apologised for coming without permission, pleading the strict orders I had received ; and then proceeded to relate what had occurred in the Council of Regency ; I said nothing about a cabal, but attributed the retirement of the Dukes, Chancellor, and Marshals simply to their refusal to allow Cardinals to take precedence of them ; adding that the affair was not at all likely to have serious consequences ; but the Duke of Orleans was anxious to show his respect by keeping them informed of everything that went on, and had therefore ordered me to tell them what had happened. The King replied drily that it was not worth while to come there to tell him such news as that, and I might have waited till he was at Madrid.

I looked at the Queen, and, addressing her, said that a man was in a difficult position who had to deal with Cardinal Dubois, who would certainly have made things very unpleasant for me if there had been the least delay in carrying out his instructions ; the more so because no doubt he knew very well that if I had been present in the Council I should have acted like the other malcontents. The Queen laughed, and said she quite understood my difficulty ; then, addressing the King, she added that there was no great harm done, except that I had been put to a good deal of trouble. She asked me a few questions about the affair ; whereupon the King, in a milder tone, said that such things did not interest him in the least, and he had no wish to meddle in the affairs of the French Court ; least of all with disputes and quarrels. I then presented them with the account I had received of all the festivities at Paris in honour of the Infanta's arrival, which interested them very much, and put them quite in good humour again. They were especially pleased to hear that the King had gone a long way out of Paris to meet the Infanta.

The members of the suite were called in, and the Queen repeated all this news to them, adding that they must read

the account themselves. She was then kind enough to concern herself about accommodation for myself and my companions. The Duke del Arco offered me a bed and supper, but there were no rooms at liberty for my suite. The Duke del Arco and the Marquis de Santa-Cruz were extremely polite; and the King himself took some little part in the discussion. I did not wish to put any one to inconvenience, and as it was clear that there was no room for my companions, I asked permission to go with them to Segovia, about six miles off; and it was finally arranged so. The Duke del Arco lent me a carriage which held the four of us, and the rest went on horseback. During the discussion the Queen spoke in a low voice to the King, and then told me that they only let me go on condition that I returned next day in time to dine with the Duke del Arco, and go with them afterwards to La Granja, where the King wished to show me the gardens which he was then laying out. The King added a few words of his own in quite a friendly way; the Queen was extremely gracious. We then took our leave and started for Segovia, escorted by horsemen carrying torches.

Those of us who rode arrived at the town before the carriage, and we found them in the street, having been unable to obtain admission anywhere, for the people took them for robbers; and for nearly an hour we thought we should have to sleep supperless in the street. At last we made such a noise before a large house that the inhabitants, reassured by the sight of the royal liveries, consented to let us in, and showed us to some bedrooms. So far, so good; but when we asked for supper we were told there was neither meat, nor bread, nor any sort of food in the house. We had eaten very little on the road, and had not thought of bringing provisions for an evening meal. It took us some time and a good deal of persuasion to overcome the ill-humour of our hosts, who were naturally put out at being disturbed at such an hour, for it was now growing late, and expected to send out to purchase materials for supper; but in this country inns and hostelries are entirely unknown. Nevertheless, after much patient waiting, we managed to get some supper, and tolerably comfortable beds.

My curiosity caused me to awake early next morning. I found that from my windows I had a near view of the superb aqueduct constructed by the Romans, which through

so many centuries has continued to distribute water from the mountains throughout the city. It is much loftier than any of those round Versailles and Marly; but what strikes one most on a near view is the closeness with which its enormous stones are put together; it really seems to consist of one single block. Segovia is a large, well-built town, with wider, straighter streets than are to be found in any Spanish city I have seen except Madrid and Valladolid. The castle is a vast and beautiful palace, which was almost entirely rebuilt by Charles V. It reminded me of Fontainebleau in its style and arrangement, especially in the ornaments of the building, its exquisitely painted ceilings, and its gilding, which looks as fresh as though it had been just laid on; but I do not hesitate to prefer Segovia. This palace is used as a State-prison; in the highest floor of the keep, which is seven stories high, was that famous friar who was brought to Paris with so much mystery by M. de Chalais, and thence taken with a strong escort to Segovia. He had been here ever since, and the gaoler informed me that he passed his time in reading novels; swearing and blaspheming against the injustice of the Spanish Court, but never saying a word to throw a light on the cause of his imprisonment. He enjoyed a fine view, at any rate; and he was allowed anything he asked for in the way of books, food, or wine; but no visitors or writing materials. I tried to get a glimpse at him at his window, but without success.

After spending the morning in sight-seeing we returned to Balsäim, and dined with the Duke del Arco; the dinner lasted a long time, for the wine, the coffee, and the talk were all very good, and so were our appetites. When it was over we waited by the little wooden staircase till their Majesties appeared and got into their carriage; they greeted me in a very friendly way; the King seemed quite used to seeing me at Balsäim, and both looked forward to showing me all their works at La Granja. This Spanish word signifies a barn, and in fact that is what it was—a solitary barn belonging to the monks of the Escurial. Philip V took a fancy to its wild situation; it was well watered, and the neighbourhood abounded in game; he determined, therefore, to buy the monks' property, and to build a residence to which he could retire when he carried out the plan he already meditated of abdicating as soon

the Prince of the Asturias should be old enough, and handing over the Crown to him. But this scheme was then known only to the Queen and Father d'Aubenton, who both shuddered at the idea, and quietly did their best to get it out of his head. The place is situated in a narrow valley at the foot of the high mountains which we had crossed coming from Madrid. The new residence was roofed in, but internally still in the masons' hands; the walls of the chapel were hardly out of the ground at the time of our visit; it was to be dedicated to San Ildefonso, and from that circumstance the place has acquired the new name by which it is generally known.

It would be hard to find a more unpleasing situation for a residence, and its designers seem to have picked out a site for the building for the express purpose of rendering it more melancholy still. If it had been placed fifty or sixty feet higher up it would have commanded a fine view of the plain of Segovia, with the city and its aqueduct in the distance; as it is, this view is completely shut out by some rising ground, so close that when one is standing on it, it seems as if one could touch the windows of the palace. At right angles to the main building, and quite close to it, is another destined for offices and kitchens, and lodgings for the servants and all the followers of the Court. I told the Queen I was surprised to see it placed so near; she replied that they liked to hear and see people about. Her real meaning, which of course I could not understand then, was that they thought it would enliven the boredom of their retirement to see and hear people from their windows.

The gardens were laid out on a large scale, and have since been extended till they stretch across the whole valley. They are supplied with water in abundance, brought from a great height in the mountains, so that a feature of the place is the number of lakes, cascades, and fountains; several of the latter were twice the height of the fine fountain at Saint-Cloud, of which the late King was so jealous. These gardens were already adorned with vases, bas-reliefs, and statues, and planted with orange-trees; there were also avenues and clumps of trees planted full-grown, according to the practice of our late King at Marly. But there is one fatal drawback to the place: the soil is a mere crust on the top of hard rock; to make these plantations and sheets of water it was necessary to blast away the rock

to a considerable depth, the loose stones being carried away on mules' backs, and fresh soil brought in the same manner. The expense of all this was enormous; and the worst of it is that sooner or later the roots of the trees will reach the rock, and when that happens their growth will be arrested and they will die.

Their Catholic Majesties did me the honour of conducting me all over the house and gardens, and seemed to take great delight in pointing out their beauties. I paid my court to them by expressing unbounded admiration of the gardens and fountains, which are indeed quite unique. The Queen was charming, and the King also joined in the conversation sometimes; they seemed to take great delight in giving orders and hearing reports about the works, which were carried on under the superintendence of the Duke del Arco. During our walk the courier who had come from Paris presented himself; I had ordered him to come, in order to send off despatches from Segovia, which is almost on the road from Madrid to Bayonne. It was Bannière, so celebrated for the number and rapidity of his journeys; their Majesties knew him, and talked to him for some time. When we returned to Balsäim the King asked me whether I was in a hurry to send off Bannière, as, if not, he should like to send some parcels by him; I replied that there was nothing urgent, but, even if there was, his wish would be quite sufficient excuse for delaying the courier. After taking my leave of them, and thanking all the noblemen of his suite, especially the Duke del Arco, for all their attentions and politeness, we went back to Segovia, where we slept; and next day we returned to Madrid.

I went to see Grimaldo, who was very glad to hear that the King, after his first coldness, had taken me to see his works, and that I was quite restored to favour. We had a long talk, and he quite agreed with the opinion I expressed as to the singular choice of a site for the palace at San Ildefonso, and the arrangement of the buildings. After this I had to answer Cardinal Dubois' letters. I told him I was extremely glad I had been absent at the time of the dispute, for most certainly I should have left the Council with the others; as for the cabal, I thought its proceedings would neither cause much alarm to the Duke of Orleans nor injure his Government. He need not, I added, be uneasy as to the impression made on the mind of His Catholic Majesty

by the affair, for I had reported it to him, and he appeared to attach no importance to it whatever. To spin out my letter a little, I told him of my boldness in forcing the barricades of Balsäim, and described the beauties and singularity of San Ildefonso; I explained that the King of Spain had asked me to keep back Bannière, and therefore I was obliged to send this letter by the ordinary post. I wound up by congratulating him on his sagacity in discovering plots and preventing them from doing any harm. I tried to put this in such a way that he should not think I was laughing at him, which indeed was the case.

By the same post I wrote to Bellisle, from whom I had also received a long letter; as I knew Dubois would see what I had written, I expressed myself in much the same way; but I added what I had not cared to say to the Cardinal himself, that, if Chavigny wished to be listened to and favourably received, it depended entirely on himself; he must behave for a considerable time in such a way as to convince people that he could be trusted; this, I said, would take too long for me, but no doubt Maulevrier would render him every assistance after my departure. This was making fun of the Cardinal again; but I wanted him to see that I did not mean to be taken in by his pretexts for keeping me in Spain. I did not expect him to be very well pleased with my reply; but I really could not bring myself to acknowledge his precedence, nor to ruin myself irreparably by remaining in Spain till it suited his good pleasure to let me return.

Their Majesties returned to Buen-Retiro on the 13th of March. My sudden journey to Balsäim and my gracious reception there had set afloat an absurd rumour that I was to be appointed Prime Minister of Spain; and the mob, apparently pleased with my lavish expenditure, began cheering me in the streets and telling me how glad they were to hear it; many assembled under my windows, and I had some difficulty in making them believe that the report was untrue, and that I was starting almost immediately for France. I also received congratulations from many noblemen about the Court. I cannot say that I was insensible to these marks of esteem and affection.

A courier despatched from Paris by the Duke d'Ossona brought me a letter from Cardinal Dubois of later date than those previously brought by Bannière. I was much

amused by it, and confirmed in my previous resolutions. I had already received all the documents necessary to enable me to take my leave; the Cardinal was dreadfully afraid lest I should do so, but he did not wish me to see it. Consequently, his letter was nothing but an alternation between "yes" and "no"; he said it was highly important that I should remain in Spain to consolidate the union between the two countries, yet there were urgent reasons connected with the interests of the Duke of Orleans why I should return immediately; I ought not to start till I had succeeded in placing Chavigny in a better position, yet he did not wish to interfere with my liberty, and left me to exercise my own judgement. I saw that if I waited for any more letters I should probably receive decided orders to remain, backed up by the Duke of Orleans; for he wrote whatever Dubois told him. So I made up my mind to go at once, and asked the King to appoint a day for my formal farewell audience.

As soon as I spoke of taking leave the Queen did all she could to persuade me to put off my departure, and even the King said something to the same effect; while the courtiers vied with each other in expressions of friendly regret. I confess I found it hard to leave a country where I had found my path strewed with flowers; I shall always retain a grateful recollection of the kindness I received there. I had an immense number of farewell visits to pay, and I had to hurry through them, for I did not wish to leave anybody out. When I called on the Duke and Duchess del Arco, who had been extremely kind to me, the Duke begged me not to re-enter the Council of Regency, or consent to yield precedence to the Cardinals. I said I was sorry he had so bad an opinion of me as to think such a thing possible, and assured him that I was quite inflexible on that point. The rank which Cardinals have gradually usurped in Spain is much resented; since the dispute in the Council of Regency had become known the Grandees, and many other men of quality, had expressed their opinions to me pretty freely; though of course it was a subject which I could not very well discuss.

I may here mention that Cardinal Borgia was a Canon of Toledo, and, as I knew that he intended to spend a few days there while the King was at Balsäim, I sent Pecquet to see what treatment he was accorded. Pecquet recorded

that the Cardinal took his place among the Canons according to his seniority; and when they walked in procession two by two he walked with the Canon next to him in seniority, unattended by an almoner; the only distinction granted to him was that in his place in the choir he had a hassock to kneel on and a cushion in front of him for his elbows. This is the treatment accorded to a Grandee of Spain; my younger son and I received it when we were at Toledo, only we were given seats at the head of the choir instead of in the body of it. This seems almost incredible; it is certainly hard to reconcile with the usual haughty presumption of the Cardinals, who claim to be the equals of Kings.

The 21st of March was the day selected for my farewell audiences, which, as usual, were separate. The King and Queen both expressed their regret at my departure in the kindest terms; so did the Prince of the Asturias; but my audience of the Princess of the Asturias was so remarkable that I cannot refrain from describing it with more detail. When I entered the room, followed by the members of my suite, she was standing under a canopy, the ladies on one side of her, the Grandees on the other. I advanced, with three bows, and made my speech; I then remained silent, expecting her to say something in reply; but she did not utter a syllable. To give her an opening, I inquired whether she had any messages for her father, mother, or grandmother. Looking me steadily in the face, she let off a belch which made the room ring again. I was so much astonished that I was quite taken aback; off went a second, as noisy as the first. At this I burst out laughing; it was impossible to help it; and, looking round, I saw everybody in suppressed fits of laughter. A third belch, louder than either of its predecessors, was too much for Spanish gravity; the whole assemblage fell into confusion, and I hastily took my departure amid shouts of laughter. All this time the Princess remained absolutely grave and imperturbable. That was all the conversation I got out of her. The King and Queen soon heard the story, and talked to me about it on the Mall that afternoon, laughing at it themselves so that their attendants might feel at liberty to do the same—a privilege of which they availed themselves freely without much pressing.

I had intended to start on the 23rd, but Maulevrier was

to be made a Knight of the Golden Fleece, and that day was chosen for the ceremony of his reception; so I thought it would be unseemly to take my departure on that very day. I attended the function as a spectator, and witnessed the marked snub which he received. After being invested with the collar, he was, as usual, led up to each Knight in turn to receive his embrace, beginning with the Prince of the Asturias; but the Prince did not stir from his place, merely extending his right hand to be kissed; and Maulevrier did kiss it. This incident gave rise to a good deal of comment, for the Prince would not have done such a thing without the King's orders; Maulevrier, however, was not in the least disconcerted. The Knights strongly resented his admission to their Order, and showed it openly; even the Marquis de Santa-Cruz, whom he had chosen to be his sponsor, carried out his functions with an air of disdain which was manifest to everybody. The Marquis, however, attended the dinner which Maulevrier gave to the Knights according to custom. Very few of them came; we were not more than a dozen or fifteen all told. The Knights were afraid lest the action of the Prince of the Asturias on this occasion should be drawn into a precedent; and I saw them in groups discussing the question of making representations to the King on the subject; as I left next day, I do not know what came of it. That afternoon I again had the honour of accompanying their Majesties on the Mall, and when they returned to their apartments they bade me farewell, with many expressions of kindness.

I gave up these last few days as much as possible to those whom in my short sojourn of six months I had learnt to consider as my particular friends, especially Grimaldo. Eager as I was to rejoin Madame de Saint-Simon and my friends at home, I could not quit Spain without regret. I kept up a correspondence for a long time with many of the gentlemen and ladies who had showed me so much kindness; with Grimaldo I continued to correspond as long as he lived; after his dismissal from office, which did not occur till long afterwards, I was careful to write with more assiduity than ever. The respectful and grateful attachment which I felt for the King and Queen of Spain caused me to write to them on all public occasions, especially to express my deep sorrow when the Infanta was sent back to her own country. On that occasion I consulted the

Bishop of Fréjus, who had already become the real master of the kingdom, and he said there was no harm in my writing; if he had refused me permission I should have told Laullez, and asked him to convey my sentiments to their Catholic Majesties. They often did me the honour of answering my letters, and whenever a new Spanish Ambassador was appointed, or any person of distinction came to travel in France with their permission, they invariably gave him all sorts of kind messages for me.

CHAPTER XXVI

1722

I leave Spain—My journey home—Letters from the Cardinal Bellisle—I visit the Duke of Berwick at Marmande—I arrive at Chartres—Proposed banishment of the Duke de Noailles—My interview with Bellisle—I arrive in Paris and interview the Regent and Cardinal Dubois—The King's confessor—I resign my Dukedom in favour of my eldest son—He takes the title of Duke de Ruffec—I call on Cardinal de Noailles and pay many visits—My daughter marries the Prince de Chimay—The Abbé de Saint-Simon's sister marries the Count de Laval—The King goes to Versailles—The Duke de Noailles is banished—Dubois schemes to get rid of the Marshal de Villeroy—The Marshal loses his temper and quarrels openly with Dubois—The Regent consults me as to his dismissal—My advice—The Marshal falls into our trap—His subsequent arrest.

At last, on the 24th of March, I got away from Madrid, and on the second day reached Pampeluna, where the Governor entertained me hospitably, and allowed me to inspect the citadel. The road through the Pyrenees from that place is shorter than the main road by Vittoria; but it had become very bad because the Spaniards, who had taken great pains to make it practicable for artillery after the accession of their French King, had with equal care broken it up again when the Duke of Orleans declared war on them at Dubois' instigation. We had to ride on mules in consequence, and the first day only got as far as Roncevaux, a horrible place, where we slept. Next morning we started very early, and reached Bayonne in the evening; from the time we left Roncevaux it rained in torrents. It would seem as though the rain were unable to cross the mountains; during the whole of my stay in Spain I hardly saw a drop; the sky was always serene, and the winds gentle.

D'Adoncourt, in spite of my remonstrances, insisted on our staying at his house, where we were most hospitably entertained. It was Holy Week, and I attended the services at the cathedral, where I was accorded the same treat-

ment as the Governor of the province. The Queen-Dowager, whom I saw several times, again insisted on my dining at her town house, where the Sieur de Bruges did the honours as on the previous occasion. Fish was served in abundance, and of excellent quality, for it had become known that I had a great craving for it after being deprived of it for so long in Spain. After dinner I went to take leave of Her Majesty, who presented me with a very handsome gold-hilted sword ; it was not set with diamonds, and the Queen made many apologies for giving me a present of such trifling value. The Bishop had invited me to supper in such a pressing manner that it was impossible to refuse. I found good company at his house, and a very good supper ; there was again plenty of fish, and I managed to find room for it.

While I was at Bayonne a courier arrived for me, bringing the Cardinal's answer to the despatch I had sent him after my visit to Balsäim. Two other couriers had been sent to me at Madrid by different routes, but both had missed me on the road ; apparently the despatches they bore were duplicates of the one I received, for I never heard anything more of them ; it is not impossible, however, that they contained peremptory orders to me to remain in Spain, and that the letter brought by the third courier to Bayonne was adapted to the case, which actually happened, of the others missing me. Such a ruse was quite in accordance with the Cardinal's character. However that may be, I found his letter quite satisfactory. He must have seen what I thought of the question of precedence in the Council, and also of the plot which he professed to have discovered ; but he said not a word on the subject, nor about Chavigny, nor of my remaining in Spain. He thanked me for my prompt journey to Balsäim ; said he was looking forward impatiently to seeing me again ; and begged me, in terms amounting almost to a command, to linger nowhere on the road to Paris, not even to make the slight deviation necessary to enable me to visit Blaye ; because they were awaiting my arrival to settle some business of an extremely important and urgent nature. There was another letter from Bellisle, evidently written in concert with the Cardinal, in which he said the business in question could not possibly be settled without me ; it was of the highest importance, but all he could tell me about it was that it did not in the least degree affect my dignity as a Duke and Peer, for on that point

they knew they had nothing to hope from me. He also begged me to hasten my journey, without stopping at Blaye.

In reply I told them what day I expected to arrive; I said I was tired with my journey to Bayonne, and wished to spend Holy Week there; I should not start therefore before Easter Monday; adding that the Duke of Berwick had particularly asked me to meet him at Marmande, and was coming there from Montauban on purpose, so that I felt bound to go out of my way a little to see him; and I wound up my letter with abundance of compliments. Considering the friendship which existed between the Duke of Berwick and myself, and all the kindness I had received from his son the Duke de Liria, I could not possibly refuse to meet him; it was natural that he should wish to see me, to discuss the position of his son at the Spanish Court, and the feelings of their Catholic Majesties regarding himself. I went to Marmande accordingly on leaving Bayonne; accompanied only by the Abbé de Saint-Simon, for I sent the rest of my suite straight to Paris. I spent a day with the Duke of Berwick and the Duke de Duras, who came with him. I found that I was only about four leagues from Duras, and I should have much liked to go there, so that I might tell Madame de Saint-Simon all about the improvements carried out there by her uncle the Marshal; for all his life he took the greatest interest in embellishing the place, though he never saw the result. I should have liked to see the place myself, but, do what I would, my friends would not allow me to go there; unfortunately they had heard, like every one else, of the repeated couriers who had been sent to me; and they dared not incur the responsibility of delaying my journey. So next morning, to my great regret, I embarked on the Garonne for Bordeaux, where Boucher, the Intendant of the Province, entertained me hospitably. Next day the tide carried me up to Blaye, where I arrived early in the loveliest weather conceivable. I spent only one night there; and did not visit Ruffec at all, to avoid further delay. Madame de Saint-Simon had arranged to meet me at Chartres, in order that we might have a quiet day to ourselves, which we could not hope to enjoy at Paris; I reached that place at ten in the morning of the 15th, and an hour later she arrived. The Marquis d'Arpajon had lent us his house there: and the day seemed to pass very quickly.

Next morning Bellisle arrived, and as soon as the first greetings were over asked for a private interview. He said Cardinal Dubois, whose disposition towards me was of the most friendly character, had sent him to explain the nature of the business referred to in his last letter. It had been decided to deprive the Duke de Noailles of his office as Captain of the Body-guard, and send him into banishment as a bitter and determined enemy of the Duke of Orleans and his government. The execution of this project had been postponed till my arrival, which was awaited with extreme impatience; and the Cardinal hoped that, considering my attachment to the Duke of Orleans and my personal experience of the duplicity of the Duke de Noailles, I should not hesitate to make common cause with him in this affair. Bellisle spoke at some length, using every artifice to stir up my hatred of the Duke de Noailles, and to induce me to seize this opportunity of ruining him irretrievably.

I replied that, so far as I was personally concerned, I should be glad enough to revenge myself on the Duke de Noailles, for I hated him as much as ever, and there was no reason why I should spare him; but passion and self-interest were dangerous guides, and before listening to them one ought to be quite sure that their counsels were supported by justice and sound judgement. In this case, I said, I could not see as yet that it would be either wise or just to take the proposed steps with regard to the Duke de Noailles. Here Bellisle tried to interrupt me, but I asked him to let me proceed. I said there were times when strong measures became necessary, but before adopting them one ought to consider the consequences. I was quite aware that the King had the power to remove the holders of such posts as were not offices of the Crown, but it did not follow that it would be wise for him to exercise it. With all my hatred for the Duke de Noailles, and my contempt for his character and his superficial talents, I could not see that he had committed any crime to justify his being stripped of his office; if he had, I said, it ought to be brought home to him, not necessarily by legal procedure, but in such a way as to satisfy the public that his removal was just. Otherwise it would appear to be an act of capricious violence, which would seriously alarm the holders of other public offices; each of them would say, "To-day it is the Duke

de Noailles; to-morrow it may be my turn, if Cardinal Dubois takes a fresh whim into his head; and who can guarantee that he will not?"

I reminded Bellisle that the Duke de Noailles was the third member of his family who had held the office of Captain of the Guard in direct succession, and that his relations and connections formed a very numerous and influential clan; I reminded him, further, that in a very short time the King would have completed his thirteenth year, when he would attain his legal majority; and asked him to reflect whether it was wise to make malcontents of so many people who had ready access to His Majesty's person and would have abundant opportunities to prejudice his mind against the Duke of Orleans' administration, especially with respect to the condition of the finances, and of the Navy, the English alliance, and the war with Spain; to say nothing of his private life.

Bellisle did not know what to say in reply to these arguments; but he did all he could to stir up my animosity against the Duke de Noailles, and said he hoped I would reflect on the matter. I replied that I would certainly do so, but at present I could not approve of Cardinal Dubois' project, and hoped he would repeat my arguments to him. I seasoned this reply with all sorts of compliments to the Cardinal, to assuage his vexation at my resistance; which was all the stronger because he dared not show it openly. This conversation lasted over an hour; we dined as soon as it was over, for we wished to reach Paris early; Bellisle started before us.

On arriving in Paris I went straight to Cardinal Dubois' rooms at the Palais-Royal; he received me with effusion, and accompanied me at once to the Duke of Orleans, whose greeting was equally warm and more sincere. We all sat down, and I had to answer a great many questions. When these were disposed of, I told the Duke of Orleans all about the behaviour of the Princess of the Asturias, and the patient kindness shown to her by their Catholic Majesties, winding up with a description of my farewell audience, which made him laugh very much. Then he talked about the exodus from the Council, skating very gingerly over the question of precedence; the Cardinal, joining in, spoke of the cabal, and said His Royal Highness could not do less than banish the Chancellor. I replied that I was in the position of a

man seeking for information, for I had seen nobody since my return ; all I could say was that the whole affair seemed very unfortunate. Then, turning to the Duke of Orleans, I said that, since the Chancellor had been sent to Fresnes merely for acting just as I should have acted myself if I had been present, I trusted His Royal Highness would not take it amiss if I went at once to visit him there.

The Regent and the Cardinal seemed petrified at this, and the latter reddened with anger. At last he broke the silence by saying, with the most benignant air he could assume, that they had complied with the King of Spain's request. I asked what request he meant. "That we should give the King a Jesuit as confessor," he said ; "Father Linières has been appointed." "Why ! the King of Spain never said a word on the subject ! " I replied. "Surely he did," said the Cardinal ; "it seems to me that you informed us in your despatches that he had spoken to you about appointing a Jesuit ! " "You are mixing up two things," I said ; "he asked that a Jesuit should be appointed to teach the Infanta, but he never said a word about the King. It is true that Father d'Aubenton did broach the subject, but I told him that the King of Spain would not like our Court to interfere with his arrangements, and any interference on his part was equally inadmissible. Father d'Aubenton admitted that I was right, and let the subject drop ; the King of Spain never alluded to it at all." The Cardinal muttered something unintelligible ; and the Duke of Orleans said, laughing, "Well, all we ask is that you will not contradict us, for we have given out that a Jesuit has been appointed at the urgent request of the King of Spain ! " I laughed too, and said all I could do for him was to assume an air of importance and refuse to answer questions ; I would not contradict him, but, on the other hand, I did not mean to tell lies about the matter. Then, addressing the Cardinal, I said he had only to refer to my despatches, and he would see that the affair was as I had stated it. The saintly prelate knew that well enough ; he laughed too, but in rather a forced manner, and said he remembered now, and I was right ; but he hoped I would hold my tongue about it.

Our conversation lasted nearly two hours ; it ended quite satisfactorily, but my plain speaking did not please Cardinal Dubois, though he dared not show his displeasure openly. Before I left, I asked and obtained permission from the

Regent to resign my dukedom in favour of my eldest son. As he was destined by his birthright to become a Duke and Peer, I did not think it seemly that he should have to yield precedence to his younger brother as a Grandee of Spain. From the Palais-Royal I went to the Tuileries to make my bow to the King, and at the conclusion of his supper I made the same request to him. When I returned home I told my eldest son what I had done; and he assumed the title of Duke de Ruffec. At the same time I made him a present of the diamonds surrounding the portrait of himself which the King of Spain had given me; they were valued by Parisian jewellers at 80,000 livres. This was the richest present ever made to an Ambassador in Spain. I had the stones made up into a magnificent badge of the Golden Fleece for my son.

The next few days had to be given up to paying and receiving visits. As soon as I could I went to see Cardinal de Noailles, for I did not wish him to be deceived about the supposed request of the King of Spain for a Jesuit confessor to the King; I told him, under strict promise of secrecy, what had passed at the Palais-Royal between the Regent, Cardinal Dubois, and myself. I also told the Bishop of Fréjus and Marshal de Villeroy, who had both protested warmly against the appointment of a Jesuit. I thought it only right that they should know the truth; they were extremely grateful to me for taking them into my confidence, and kept the secret faithfully. I told it to no one else, contenting myself with taking no notice of questions on the subject. I chose the first day on which the Council of Regency was to meet to pay a round of visits to those members who had quitted it. I heard that Marshal de Villeroy, who still went to the meetings in attendance on the King, standing behind his chair without taking any part in the proceedings, had sent down to the great court of the Tuileries to see whether my carriage was there; and next time we met he told me how glad he was that I had not re-entered the Council. I replied that he little knew me if he thought it likely that I should do such a thing. A week after my return I went to Fresnes and spent three days there with the Chancellor; this visit, and those I had made so pointedly to the ex-members of the Council, were the subject of much comment.

It was at this time that I heard how the officer whom I

had despatched from Spain with the King's marriage-contract at last received the honours and pension which I had solicited on his behalf. Cardinal Dubois always snubbed him and put him off, and even Leblanc, the Secretary of State for War, no longer dared say a word on the subject. The officer, in despair, contented himself with presenting himself in silence before the Cardinal, who took no notice of him. One day the great antechamber was crowded with Ambassadors, Bishops, and persons of distinction; the Papal Nuncio was there, and many ladies. As the Cardinal entered some one got hold of him and began talking to him, following him right into the middle of the room. Apparently he importuned Dubois, for he turned upon him furiously, telling him to be gone, with all the most obscene words in the language, shouting and swearing at the top of his voice. My friend, the officer, was also following in hopes of attracting his attention; such an outburst from a Cardinal-Archbishop in the midst of such an assembly tickled his fancy so much that he burst into a loud fit of laughter. The Cardinal turned and saw him; he instantly put his hand on his shoulder—"You seem to be no fool!" he said. "I will tell M. Leblanc to put your business through at once"; and with that he passed on. The poor officer, who had given himself up for lost when he felt the Cardinal's hand on his shoulder, was so much astonished that he could not utter a word of thanks. He went to Leblanc next morning, and found that the favours I had asked for him were all granted; he at once went off to relate his adventure to Madame de Saint-Simon, still unable to repress his laughter.

I had now to conclude a marriage for my daughter, which had been proposed before I went to Spain. Some women are so constituted that it is better for them to remain unmarried, with the revenue of what would have been their dowry. Madame de Saint-Simon and I had reason to think that such was the case with our daughter; but my mother thought otherwise, and she was accustomed to have her own way. The Prince de Chimay, seeing the position I was in, thought a marriage with my daughter would be a great thing for him. I told him plainly that his hopes were quite groundless, and did my best to dissuade him; I insisted, at any rate, that the matter should stand over till I returned from Spain, to give him time for reflection. But he kept on importuning Madame Saint-Simon during

my absence, and when I came back I was forced to give in. The wedding took place at Meudon as quietly and with as little ceremony as possible.

The Prince de Chimay came of the family of Hennin-Liétard, well known for its great estates in the Low Countries, its distinguished connections, and the high offices held by its members in the time of Charles V and ever since. They try to make out that they are descended from the illustrious House of Alsace; it is very absurd, for their pedigree is sufficiently ancient and distinguished to require no fabulous embellishments. This Prince de Chimay, like his brother, was a Lieutenant-General in the Spanish service, and had distinguished himself highly by his courage. I have already mentioned that, when a very young man, he received the Golden Fleece from Charles II. He settled in Spain, where he was created a Grandee. Returning to France, he married the daughter of the Duke de Nevers, who died after a few years, leaving no children. He was a good-looking man, with an agreeable expression of countenance; his air and manners were those of a great nobleman; as he was, for his estates were extensive and valuable. Unfortunately, they were for the most part in the hands of receivers, for he was terribly embarrassed; though clever and a good talker, he had no sense, and never could manage his own affairs. The Duchess Sforza, who had known him intimately at the time of his first marriage, foretold only too truly what would be the result of this one.

A few days later we had another wedding from my house: that of the Abbé de Saint-Simon's sister to the Count de Laval, who has since become Marshal of France. Madame de Saint-Simon had always taken a great interest in the bride, and had her to stay with her the whole time I was in Spain. She was a very pretty girl, with an air of gentle modesty which was very attractive; and she was as good as she was pretty. Her wit and agreeable manners have been of great assistance to her husband's career. Of him I need not say anything; his illustrious name and the reward which he has justly received for his long services speak for themselves. A small government was granted to him on the occasion of his marriage, with a pension for his wife.

It was finally decided that the King should leave Paris altogether, and on the 15th of June he moved in great

state to Versailles, the Infanta following next day. They occupied the apartments of the late King and Queen, and rooms were fitted up for Marshal de Villeroy at the back of the King's rooms. The Duke of Orleans took those on the ground-floor, formerly occupied by Monseigneur; but the Duchess retained those she already had upstairs. This migration of the Court was the work of Cardinal Dubois, who was bent on being appointed Prime Minister, and foresaw that the Duke of Orleans, drawn continually to Paris by the attraction of the Opera and his accustomed suppers with his *roués*, would leave the business of the country more and more in his hands.

Although I had greatly displeased the Cardinal by making common cause with the malcontents in the Council, and by opposing the dismissal of the Duke de Noailles, he did not like to show his vexation as yet; he interposed no obstacles to my seeing the Duke of Orleans as usual, and even treated me with a certain amount of deference. But I heard nothing of public affairs, except such scraps of information as the Duke of Orleans, by force of habit, let fall in his conversations with me. It is true that the Cardinal did offer to tell me all that went on. His object was to make me think that it was the Duke of Orleans who kept me in the dark; but I had no difficulty in seeing how matters really stood, and I distrusted the Cardinal too much to be taken in by his flattering offers. He dreaded my opposition to his project of being made Prime Minister; so he took care to be extremely gracious whenever we met in the presence of the Duke of Orleans, in order to persuade him that he spared no pains to be on good terms with me. In this way he hoped to weaken the force of anything I might say to the Duke of Orleans in opposition to any of his schemes.

One question on which we differed soon presented itself, that of the banishment of the Duke de Noailles; he did not venture to speak to me about it, but the Duke of Orleans told me that he was always urging it upon him. I did my utmost to dissuade him from it, reminding him that, considering my personal feelings towards Noailles, my voice given in his favour ought to outweigh a dozen others. I succeeded to a certain extent, for the question was left in suspense for a week or more, during which the Cardinal sent Bellisle to me repeatedly, hoping to overcome my opposition by appeals to my hatred and my personal interests. Finally

I prevailed so far that the matter was dropped altogether, as I thought; but in reality not for very long. Some four or five weeks afterwards, going to see the Duke of Orleans at the Palais-Royal, I found La Vrillière waiting by himself in the antechamber; which surprised me, because it was not the usual hour for him. I went in to the Duke of Orleans' room, and found him alone, looking rather embarrassed; I asked him what was the matter, and why La Vrillière was in attendance. "We are going to put the finishing touch," he said. "To what?" I asked. "To the affair of the Duke de Noailles," he said. "What, Sir?" I exclaimed, "are you going to consent to his banishment after listening to all my arguments against it, and showing clearly that you felt their force? Surely, Sir, you do not mean it?"

A sort of conversation ensued, during which I repeated my chief arguments; he said little, but walked up and down his little room, with his eyes fixed on the floor, as he always did when perplexed and worried. After this he went and stood in silence for some minutes with his nose against the window-panes; at last he turned to me and said moodily, "The wine is drawn, and we must drink it!" I saw that an internal struggle had been going on; he felt that I was right, but the Cardinal had extorted his consent, and he dared not withdraw it. I shrugged my shoulders, saying that he was the master, and must do as he pleased; I only hoped the affair might turn out well for him. Then he called La Vrillière and gave him his final orders; and the Duke de Noailles received notice to leave Paris next morning for his estates near the Viscounty of Turenne. There he affected a great deal of piety, and took part in religious processions; for which he was much laughed at in Paris, where, ever since the Regency began, he had been publicly keeping an actress in order to curry favour with the Regent.

The Duke de Noailles being thus disposed of, there still remained a man who was really the plague of Dubois' life, I mean Marshal de Villeroy, whose tongue, quite unrestrained by considerations of prudence or even of ordinary propriety, never ceased from denouncing the Cardinal and all his works. Even to the Regent himself he used to talk about him in the most audacious way; and these speeches lost nothing of their vigour when he came to boast about them in public, as he invariably did. He could not bear the authority which Dubois had usurped over public affairs; and it

mortified him beyond endurance to be forced to yield precedence to a man whom he remembered hanging about the antechamber of the Chevalier de Lorraine, and whom he then thought highly honoured if he condescended to give him a slight nod in passing.

The Cardinal realised that the Marshal would not be got rid of so easily as the Duke de Noailles, and spared no efforts to conciliate him ; he even went so far as to offer to bring him his portfolio every day, and ask his advice in all public business of importance. But, vain and silly as Marshal de Villeroy was, he had seen too much of the world and knew Dubois too well to trust to these offers ; besides, he had no wish to take any part in the Duke of Orleans' administration ; his ambition was to become a sort of leader of opposition, round whom all malcontents and grumblers could rally ; he fancied himself the idol of the mob, and the trusted adviser of the Parliament ; he liked to pose as the man to whose vigilance alone the country owed the safety of its King. Having twice narrowly escaped dismissal (and he had never forgiven me the fright I gave him on those occasions), he considered himself quite safe for the future, and thought, in his overweening conceit, that he was a man with whom nobody dared meddle. He had just given the people of Paris a remarkable illustration of his fatuity. The Feast of the Holy Sacrament fell this year on the 4th of June, before the Court left for Versailles ; the procession visited the chapel of the Tuileries, and the King accompanied it thence to the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, where he heard High Mass. Marshal de Villeroy proclaimed that he dared not let the King out of his sight, though surrounded by his Guards and at that time adored in Paris ; so, as his gout would not allow him to walk the streets, he mounted the smallest pony he could procure and rode just behind the King ; much stared at by the populace and a laughing-stock to everybody else.

Cardinal Dubois was, then, at his wits' end to know what to do about the Marshal ; every day that went by without his being appointed Prime Minister seemed to him a year ; yet he dared not urge the Regent to take a step of such importance in face of the clamour which would undoubtedly be raised unless he could first find some means of propitiating Marshal de Villeroy. In this perplexity it occurred to him to ask the good offices of Cardinal de Bissy, who was highly

pleased with his conduct in the affair of the Constitution, and also with the recent appointment of a Jesuit to be the King's confessor, in defiance of Cardinal de Noailles. Bissy was a close friend of the Marshal's; he readily undertook to render this service to his brother-Cardinal; and carried out his commission with such skill that after much persuasion Villeroy consented to accompany him to call on Dubois. The day they chose for the visit was not one on which I usually saw the Duke of Orleans, but it so chanced that some business, I forget what, had brought me over from Meudon to see him.

It was a Tuesday, the day on which Cardinal Dubois received foreign Ambassadors; and when Bissy and Villeroy arrived he was closeted with the Russian Minister, while others were waiting in the antechamber. The attendants wished to inform Dubois of so unusual an event as a visit from Marshal de Villeroy, but he would not allow it, and sat down with Bissy to wait till he was at liberty. When the audience was over Cardinal Dubois came out of his room to reconduct the Russian Ambassador; he went straight up to the sofa where Bissy and Villeroy were sitting; said he was sorry he had not been informed of their presence, and with a great many polite speeches to the Marshal led them into his room, apologising to the other Ambassadors for doing so, on the ground that Marshal de Villeroy could not be long absent from the King.

At first all went well; Bissy opened the interview with some appropriate and conciliatory remarks, and Dubois spoke politely to the Marshal, who began to reply in the same strain. Unfortunately, as he proceeded he was carried away by his own eloquence; the part of the blunt, plain-spoken man appealed to his imagination, and as he warmed to his work he began telling Dubois some home-truths not far removed from insults. The Cardinal, though very much astonished, tried to take all this in good part; while Bissy did his best to interpose and give a more friendly turn to the interview. But the tide of the Marshal's eloquence was still rising, he soon proceeded to downright insults and the most offensive reproaches; Bissy's remonstrances only added fuel to the fire; every outrageous insinuation which insolence and contempt could suggest came pouring from his lips.

Dubois stood stupefied; Bissy, justly indignant at the

Marshal's conduct, tried in vain to stop him ; he had planted himself in the doorway so that it was impossible for them to get out, and they were forced to go on listening. From insults he proceeded to threats and derisive defiances ; he told Dubois that after this scene there could be no question of reconciliation between them, and he would warn him plainly that sooner or later he would inflict on him every injury in his power ; in the meantime, he added, he would give him a piece of advice. "You are all-powerful," he said ; "nothing can resist you ; what are the greatest men compared to you ? Well, then, use your power, and have me arrested ! Who is to prevent you ? Have me arrested, I tell you, if you dare ; it is the only thing for you to do ! " And so he went on, insulting and defying a man who was only too eager for his arrest, believing in fact that it would open for him the gates of Paradise ! At last Bissy, beside himself with anger, seized the Marshal by the shoulders and fairly pushed him out of the room ; Dubois, more dead than alive, following them in order, if possible, to keep up appearances before the foreign Ministers in the anteroom. But they were all three so visibly agitated that it was obvious that a violent scene had taken place ; the news soon spread all over Versailles, and it was confirmed by the defiant boasts of Marshal de Villeroy himself.

In the meanwhile I had been working and conversing with the Duke of Orleans. He had gone into his dressing-room for a minute or two, and I was standing by the table arranging some papers, when Cardinal Dubois burst into the room like a whirlwind. Seeing me alone he shouted out, "Where is the Duke of Orleans ? " I said he was in his dressing-room, and asked what was the matter. "I am a ruined man," he cried, "I am a ruined man ! " The Duke of Orleans, hearing his voice, ran in, asking the same question. The Cardinal's habitual stutter was so much increased by his agitation that it took him a long time to tell his story ; he wound up by saying that His Royal Highness must choose between Marshal de Villeroy and himself, for after such a treacherous and premeditated insult he could not with any self-respect remain in the Court if the Marshal was to be there on the same footing as before. The Duke of Orleans and I listened in indescribable astonishment ; we could hardly believe our ears ; but in reply to our questions the Cardinal stuck to his story, and offered to

call in Cardinal de Bissy to confirm it; repeating that the Regent must choose between himself and Marshal de Villeroy.

The Duke of Orleans, in great embarrassment, asked what I thought of it; turning to me, so it seemed at least, as to a man who had always opposed the dismissal of Marshal de Villeroy. I said I felt quite bewildered, and should like time to think the matter over; he still pressed me for an answer, however; so I said that, for reasons with which His Royal Highness was familiar, I had always thought it undesirable to interfere with Marshal de Villeroy, and, now that the King was so near his majority, those reasons had acquired additional force. But, after the shocking scene which had just taken place, it seemed to me that the circumstances were altered; it would be more dangerous to leave such a man about the King's person than to remove him, for I could not conceal from myself that the Marshal had in reality thrown down the gauntlet to the Duke of Orleans; his ironical requests to be arrested showed that he knew he deserved it, but thought nobody either dared or could do such a thing. From the very outset of the Regency, I said, he had been secretly endeavouring to undermine the authority of the Duke of Orleans, whose kind treatment had not modified his ill-will in the slightest degree; now he had thrown off his mask and shown himself determined to go into open opposition. Since His Royal Highness wished me to give my opinion off-hand I would say that I thought the Marshal ought to be deprived of his office, but that a little time should be allowed to consider the best way of carrying out that decision, so as to avoid any resistance.

While I was speaking the Cardinal was all attention; he drank in my words like a man listening to a verdict of life or death; when he heard my decision his face beamed, as much at least as his boiling anger would permit. The Duke of Orleans approved of what I had said; and the Cardinal, casting a grateful look at me, told him that if Marshal de Villeroy was to be removed it ought to be done quickly, for it was impossible that matters should be allowed to remain in their present situation. It was finally decided that the remainder of the day and the next morning should be devoted to considering the best way of acting on our decision, and I was told to come to the Duke of Orleans' room at half-past three in the afternoon of next day.

When I arrived there I found him alone with Cardinal Dubois; but M. le Duc arrived a minute or two later; he had heard all about the affair, but the Cardinal, who was more composed than on the previous day, told him the story again. I heard that Marshal de Villeroy had gone about boasting of the insults he had heaped on the Cardinal and the challenge he had given him in such a way as to make it absolutely necessary to deal with him without delay. After a little talk the Cardinal left us; the Duke of Orleans then sat down to his writing-table, M. le Duc and I sitting opposite. He said we had to decide which of two courses was the least dangerous, to leave Marshal de Villeroy undisturbed or to deprive him of his office; after giving a brief description of the relations between the Marshal and himself since the late King's death, he reminded us that on two occasions he had wished to dismiss him and appoint me to take his place; the difficulty of doing so had increased as time went on, for he had become so firmly rooted in his position that he could not be removed without an act of violence, and indeed the Marshal himself seemed to think that he was invulnerable. The Regent proceeded to sum up the arguments on each side, briefly and impartially; then, turning to me, he asked me what I thought about it.

I said I was still of the same opinion, that after what had happened it would be dangerous to leave Marshal de Villeroy about the King's person. I had always looked upon him as a man of very little sense or moral courage; and so long as he confined himself to aping M. de Beaufort and displaying a vague ill-will towards the Government I had thought the best way was to treat him with contempt, as a sort of stage-hero who might safely be allowed to strut and prance about to his heart's content. But the recent scene put a different complexion on the matter. It was not easy to say what the explanation of it was. Possibly Marshal de Villeroy, puffed up with pride at having reduced Cardinal Dubois to make humble overtures to him, had gone to the interview in good faith, with the intention of accepting them, and then, when in the presence of the man he hated and despised, had lost his head and said things which he had never intended to say; becoming more and more excited as he went on, till he was in the frame of mind of a drunken man defying an army. On the other hand, it was possible that Cardinal de Bissy had been his dupe; that he had gone

to the meeting with the deliberate intention of affronting Dubois, thinking to raise himself in public estimation by posing as the declared enemy of an unpopular Minister. But whichever explanation we adopted it came to the same thing in the end ; the Marshal had obviously declared war against the Regent, and crossed the Rubicon with great parade and ostentation. To leave him undisturbed after this would be an act of weakness and timidity ; it would cause all the malcontents to rally round Marshal de Villeroy, and the Regent's Government would lose all authority.

The Duke of Orleans listened attentively, but with an air of visible embarrassment. When I had finished, he asked M. le Duc for his opinion, who said he agreed with me entirely, adding that, if Marshal de Villeroy was allowed to retain his position, the Regent might as well shut up shop ("il n'y avait qu'à mettre la clef sous la porte")—that was his expression. He also said that he thought there would be no delay. We then discussed the best way of dealing with the Marshal. I said the first thing was to find a good pretext for arresting him, one which would prevent even his own friends from taking his part ; it would not do to let the public think that he was punished for his insult to Cardinal Dubois, gross as it was ; for the Cardinal was universally disliked, and sympathy would be entirely on the side of the offender. I suggested that by waiting a few days the Marshal could easily be induced to furnish a reason for arresting him which every one would consider sufficient. I reminded the Duke of Orleans that he had often told me, and repeated quite lately, that he never could see the King in private, and that if he even tried to speak to him in a low voice the Marshal invariably thrust his head between the King's and his own, giving out afterwards that, as the King's governor, he ought to hear everything that was said to him, and certainly could not allow His Majesty to be alone with any one, not even with His Royal Highness. This was considered by everybody to be grossly insolent to the Regent, himself a Grandson of France, and the King's nearest relation ; and it would be generally admitted that, the King having nearly attained his majority, it was for the public welfare that the Regent should speak to him of many things connected with the administration which could not well be discussed in the presence of a witness. I suggested, therefore, that the Duke of Orleans should ask for a private

interview of the King; the Marshal would probably fall into the trap and refuse; if so, the Regent, contenting himself with a dignified rebuke while in the King's presence, should make the refusal the pretext for the Marshal's arrest. But, I added, the trap should not be set till all the arrangements for the arrest were complete.

As soon as I had finished—"You have taken the words out of my mouth," said the Duke of Orleans; "I was about to suggest the very same thing!" and, turning to M. le Duc, he asked what he thought of it. M. le Duc said he approved of my proposal, and thought the sooner it was carried out the better. After a little discussion about what should be done with Marshal de Villeroy after his arrest, the Duke of Orleans asked me to go to Cardinal Dubois' room, where I should find people waiting to talk over the arrangements with me. This showed me clearly that the arrest had already been decided between the Regent and his Minister; and that I had only been asked to the conference just described in order that I might give my opinion before M. le Duc, and secure his acquiescence in the removal of the Marshal.

I found Cardinal Dubois in a company which surprised me considerably; but he told me at once that they were all in the secret. There were Marshal Berwick, who had arrived from Guyenne a day or two previously; Cardinal de Rohan, and his brother the Prince; Leblanc, and Bellisle. Leblanc's presence was necessary, as he would be officially responsible for the arrangements; but I thought that of Bellisle and the Rohans might have been dispensed with; and I was very much surprised to see the Duke of Berwick, for in the late King's time he had always been regarded as a sort of *protégé* of Marshal de Villeroy, who, knowing his master's weakness for bastards of distinction, had contributed greatly to his rapid elevation in the service. But I think he was rather tired of Villeroy's patronising airs, for he expressed himself very forcibly against him in the conversation which followed; as did the Rohans, who had a private grievance to avenge. Cardinal Dubois began by telling me that they had been impatiently awaiting my arrival to hear what the Regent had decided; as if the very fact of this little gathering did not show clearly enough that he knew it already. When the discussion was at an end, and everything settled for the arrest, I arranged privately

with Leblanc that as soon as it was effected he should send over to Meudon to inquire after my health; this would mean that everything had gone off quietly and the Marshal was safe in his cage.

During the following days the scene between Marshal de Villeroy and Dubois was the only topic of conversation, and the Marshal's conduct was generally blamed; but people were so used to his follies and to the Regent's weakness that nobody thought anything would happen to him in consequence. I was delighted that this impression should prevail, as it tended to lull the Marshal into security, and made it easier to carry out what was preparing for him. Next time I saw the Duke of Orleans he told me that, as I had often spoken well of the Duke de Charost, he had privately offered him the post of governor to the King; and Charost had promised not to leave his rooms till all was over, so as to be ready to accompany him to the King at a moment's notice.

On Sunday, the 12th of August, the Duke of Orleans went to transact business with the King, Marshal de Villeroy and the Bishop of Fréjus being present. When it was over he asked the King to be good enough to come into the adjoining room with him, as he had something private to communicate. Marshal de Villeroy instantly opposed this; and the Duke of Orleans was delighted to see him walk into the trap which he had set for him. He submitted to him very politely that the King had now reached an age when he as Regent ought to inform him more fully about public affairs, and it was sometimes desirable to do so without the presence of a third person, however distinguished; out of respect for the Marshal, he said, he had hitherto refrained from insisting on this, perhaps too long; but he must now ask him to desist from opposing a thing so manifestly proper and necessary. The Marshal, shaking his wig, replied that he knew the respect due to His Royal Highness, but he also knew the duty imposed upon him by his office; he could not allow any private communications with the King, because he ought to hear all that was said to him; certainly, as responsible for the safety of the King's person, he could not allow him to go out of his sight. The Duke of Orleans, looking him steadily in the face, told him with much dignity that he was forgetting himself, and to whom he was speaking; respect for the King's presence, he added,

prevented him from answering him as he deserved or from continuing the discussion. Thereupon, with a low bow to the King, he left the room.

The Marshal followed him, muttering and gesticulating; the Duke took not the slightest notice of him, but went on his way; leaving the King very much astonished, and the Bishop of Fréjus laughing in his sleeve. But, as it had been anticipated, the Marshal soon realised the difference between outraging an unpopular personage like Dubois, and openly defying and insulting the Regent of the kingdom; in less than two hours it became known that, while boasting loudly of what he had done, he had said that he should consider himself very unfortunate if the Duke of Orleans thought him wanting in respect, and he would go next morning to give him an explanation of his conduct which he trusted would prove satisfactory.

All the arrangements had been carefully made, and only the finishing touch had to be given them when it became known that next morning the Marshal would walk into the lion's den of his own accord. Adjoining the Duke of Orleans' private room was a fine spacious anteroom, with four windows opening like doors on to the garden. Artagnan, commanding the Grey Musketeers, was posted in this room; he was in the secret, and had sent for a number of officers and men on whom he could rely; many members of the Duke of Orleans' staff and household were also in attendance. About twelve o'clock Marshal de Villeroy came in, with his usual fuss and bustle; his entry was like that of an actor coming on to the stage; he stopped, looked round, and in an authoritative tone asked for the Duke of Orleans. Being informed that His Royal Highness was engaged and unable to see him, he exclaimed that he insisted on going in, and made a step or two forward. La Fare, Captain of the Duke of Orleans' Guards, immediately interposed, informed him that he was placed under arrest, and demanded his sword. The Marshal flew into a passion, and there was a general commotion; at this moment a sedan-chair, which had been kept concealed, was brought forward, the Marshal, whose legs could no longer support him, was thrust into it, and in the twinkling of an eye he was carried out into the garden, escorted by La Fare and Artagnan. Down the steps of the orangery they went hastily; the great gate was open, and a coach with six

horses was waiting in readiness. The sedan-chair was set down by it; in vain the Marshal raved and stormed; he was hustled into the carriage, Artagnan took his place by his side, Libois and an officer of Musketeers facing them; an escort of twenty Musketeers fell in round the coach, and then, "Drive on, coachman!"

That side of the gardens was deserted in the noonday heat, and this scene passed unobserved; strange to say, the Marshal's arrest was not generally known at Versailles for more than two hours. He had left his own sedan-chair outside the guardroom in charge of his servants, and they waited patiently for him till the Duke of Orleans, after his interview with the King, sent them word that their master had gone to Villeroy, and that they had better take him such things as he required. I received the prearranged message from Leblanc at Meudon just as I was sitting down to dinner; but it was not till nearly supper-time that people arrived from Versailles and made the news public; it had caused great surprise there, and some consternation.

CHAPTER XXVII

1722

The King is informed of Marshal de Villeroy's arrest and is much distressed—While at Meudon I receive a despatch from Dubois imploring me to return to Versailles immediately—I am requested to bring some one to ride at once to La Trappe—The Bishop of Fréjus' disappearance—He is speedily traced and the King consoled—The Duke of Charost appointed governor to the King—Dubois schemes to be made Prime Minister—I discuss the matter with the Regent—His excuse for acceding to Dubois' wishes—My entreaties and plain speaking are in vain—Dubois is appointed Prime Minister and professes to believe he owes his appointment to my good offices—General disapproval of the appointment—Betrothal of the Infant Don Carlos and the fifth daughter of the Duke of Orleans.

The Duke of Orleans had now to inform the King of Marshal de Villeroy's arrest, and it was no very pleasant task. At his first words the King changed countenance, and his eyes filled with tears; he hid his face in the back of his arm-chair without saying a word, and refused either to play or go out. At supper he hardly ate anything, and he did not sleep all night, weeping continually. He had not recovered his composure in the morning, and refused to eat at dinner.

That same day, the 14th of August, I was entertaining a number of people at dinner; when we left the dining room a servant told me that a messenger had arrived from Cardinal Dubois, with a letter, but he had thought it better not to bring him in while we were at table. I opened the letter; the Cardinal implored me to come to Versailles at once, bringing with me a man who could ride to La Trappe immediately; adding that I need not try to guess the reason, for I should never succeed, but he was waiting for me with the utmost impatience. I ordered my carriage at once, but the stables of the new *château* of Meudon, where I was living, are a long way from the house; and this caused a most vexatious delay. I racked my brains to divine the reason for this sudden message to La Trappe; I could only suppose that some important fugitive had been discovered

there, perhaps implicated in some way with the affair of the Constitution.

As soon as I came in sight of the palace I saw Cardinal Dubois at his window, and he was with me directly I got out of my carriage. His first question was whether I had brought the man; I pointed to a servant who had often been to La Trappe with me, and knew the place well; the Cardinal recognised him, for in the days when he was still an Abbé of humble degree he frequently called on me, and used to talk to this man while waiting in the antechamber. As we ascended the steps he told me about the King's tears and agitation, which he said were augmented by the absence of the Bishop of Fréjus, who had suddenly disappeared; all they knew about him was that he had not gone to Villeroy, for they had just received news from that place; they could only conjecture that he had gone to hide himself at La Trappe.

We went straight to the rooms of the Duke of Orleans, whom we found in great trouble; he said he did not know what to do, for the King was perpetually crying out for M. de Fréjus, and it was impossible to calm him. A moment later, Cardinal and Prince de Rohan came in, with Pezé, whose relationship to Madame de Ventadour did not prevent him from being very glad to get rid of Marshal de Villeroy; he was a great friend of the Bishop of Fréjus, but nevertheless very angry with him for this escapade. Cardinal Dubois asked me to write a letter to the Abbot of La Trappe, but they were all talking at once, denouncing M. de Fréjus, and it was impossible to write there; my own rooms were probably locked up, as I was not expected, so Pezé took me to his room, where I could write undisturbed. But I had hardly finished my letter when Pezé ran up again, crying, "He is found, he is found! we do not want your letter; come back to the Duke of Orleans!" He told me that they had found out by accident that M. de Fréjus had gone on the previous evening to stay with President Lamoignon at Basville. The Duke of Orleans went at once to announce the good news to the King, and to tell him that he would send to Basville immediately, to bring back his tutor.

The Rohans and Pezé then took their departure, and I remained alone with the Cardinal. He told me they had received news from Villeroy. All the way thither the Marshal

had never ceased to rave against the Regent and himself; he deplored the disturbances which his arrest would cause in Paris and throughout the kingdom, and said it would make a great sensation in foreign countries; he pitied the fate of the King, for he said it had evidently been determined to remove all the guardians chosen by the late King to watch over him;—first the Duke of Maine, and now himself; then he went into long panegyrics of his own services, his fidelity, firmness, and unremitting attachment to his duty; mingled with invectives against Artagnan for lending himself to an act of such criminal violence. In short, he was beside himself with rage and mortification. The Duke de Villeroy, Marshal Tallard, and Biron received permission next day to go to Villeroy; hardly anybody else asked it.

The Duke of Orleans, on his return, told us that the King seemed quieted by the prospect of having his tutor back again. We talked the matter over, and it was agreed that steps should be taken to ensure Fréjus' return early next morning; that the Duke of Orleans should give him a friendly welcome, assuring him that it was only to save him embarrassment that he had not told him beforehand of his intention to have Marshal de Villeroy arrested, giving his reasons for that step, and asking him to explain them to the King. He could do this the more easily because Fréjus in his heart disliked the Marshal and would be delighted to get rid of his airs and caprices. Advantage was to be taken of the King's pleasure at seeing Fréjus again to present the Duke de Charost to him as his future governor; and the Duke of Orleans was to ask Fréjus to advise Charost as to his conduct, assuring him that he would find him always ready to work in concert with him. All this was duly carried out next morning.

When the news reached the Marshal at Villeroy he broke out into furious invectives against the Bishop of Fréjus, calling him a treacherous rascal, and a viper whom he had for years been cherishing in his bosom. He said, what was perfectly true, that without his assistance Fréjus would never have been the King's tutor; but it was only by degrees that he explained what was the particular act of treachery which he denounced so vehemently. It seems that at the very outset of the Regency they had bound themselves by a mutual promise that if one of them were removed from his post about the King's person the other

would immediately retire and refuse to resume his offices until his colleague was reinstated. The Marshal was never tired of declaiming against this perfidious wretch, as he called him; who, in his fear of losing his place, had made a retreat to Basville which was the merest sham; knowing that he would be promptly discovered and brought back, and in this way pretended to carry out their solemn reciprocal engagement. All this soon reached the ears of Fréjus, who seemed rather embarrassed in spite of his assumed tranquillity, but maintained silence. He could not, however, avoid giving some explanation to the Duke de Villeroy, Marshal Tallard, and other friends of the Marshal; he contented himself with telling them quietly that he had done his best to carry out his promise, but he thought he had no right to disobey the Regent or abandon the King altogether; especially as he saw that the reinstatement of the Marshal, which was the main object of their engagement, was quite out of the question.

The Marshal's first outbursts of fury were succeeded by deep dejection when he saw with what indifference the news of his arrest was received by the public. In his absurd conceit he had imagined that the Parliament, the market-halls, and the populace of Paris would rise in revolt if the Regent dared to touch such a distinguished and popular man as he flattered himself to be; when he could no longer disguise from himself the unpleasant truth that everything remained perfectly quiet he fell into a profound melancholy. He was allowed to remain at Villeroy for a few days to rest; after which he was sent to Lyons, with permission to exercise his functions as governor of that town; but, as Libois was still left in charge of his person his authority was entirely destroyed, and there was no fear of his abusing it.

Such was the catastrophe of this man, who held many important posts in his time, and showed weakness and incapacity in every one of them. He never recovered from the effects of his last piece of folly, but for the rest of his life was left contemptuously to his own unavailing regrets. He had made the King believe that there was a design to poison him, which was thwarted only by his constant vigilance; hence the King's tears on hearing of his arrest, and his despair when Fréjus also disappeared; he did not doubt that both had been removed in order to facilitate the

crime. The prompt return of Fréjus did something to calm his fears, and as his health continued to be good they gradually disappeared altogether. The tutor did his best to dispel them ; for he had no wish to see Marshal de Villeroy return when the King attained his majority. He knew the King disliked the Marshal's airs and the authoritative tone he assumed towards him in public ; the dread of poison once removed, it was easy, without bringing any direct accusation against the Marshal, to lead the King to suspect his motives in making such horrible insinuations ; the King, in short, finding that he continued to enjoy perfect health, began to look upon the Marshal as a self-interested calumniator, and considered himself free from any obligation to recall him when he became his own master. In this way Fréjus sought to establish his influence over the King without a rival ; we have since had only too good reason to know how completely he succeeded.

Having got rid of Marshal de Villeroy Cardinal Dubois resolved to profit by the consternation which this event had produced among all classes, and especially in the Parliament, to have himself appointed Prime Minister. His influence over the mind of his master was already boundless ; nothing was decided except on his advice ; the Regent had become a mere cipher, to whom nobody ventured to address himself without first making sure that the Cardinal would not take it amiss ; in short, his good pleasure, that is to say his caprices and his selfish interests, had become the mainspring of the whole Government. Public affairs were none the better administered for that ; all business, whether foreign or domestic, was in arrears ; the Cardinal's narrow brain could not take in more than one thing at a time, and he gave only so much attention to public business as was necessary to keep it entirely in his own hands. The Duke of Orleans saw all this, and felt it ; but he had become like a man paralyzed and could not stir without the Cardinal's assistance. I was deeply grieved by this state of affairs, not only from personal attachment to the Duke of Orleans, but because, knowing him as I did, I perceived that the case was hopeless.

Notwithstanding the absolute ascendancy which the Cardinal had acquired, he was still rather afraid of me ; he had done his best to restrict his master's confidence in me, but he had been unable to destroy it altogether ; it was a

relief to the Duke of Orleans to see me and talk to me, as he sometimes showed plainly. The usurper knew that I never hesitated to speak my mind freely; for this reason he treated me with a courtesy and consideration which he had ceased to show to any one else; and this in its turn forced me to behave politely to him. In this state of affairs he sent Bellisle to me, to persuade me not to oppose his appointment as Prime Minister. Bellisle represented to me that it was only a question of time, that to all appearance the appointment must be made sooner or later; so that I had better give in with a good grace; if I opposed it I should incur the lasting resentment of the Cardinal, while if I assisted him to obtain the object of his ardent ambition there was nothing he would not do to show his gratitude, and he would even admit me to a share in the administration of public affairs.

I told Bellisle that it was easy to see that such a proposition did not emanate from himself alone; and he admitted at once that the Cardinal had instructed him to make it, and had given him permission to say so. I asked Bellisle to thank the Cardinal for this mark of confidence; as for the matter itself, I said it was so important that it required full deliberation; I would, however, suggest one consideration which occurred to me, namely, that as he already possessed all the power and advantages of a Prime Minister, I did not see what he had to gain by a formal appointment; on the contrary, it seemed to me that if anything could impair the good relations between the Duke of Orleans and himself it would be the jealousy and suspicion which such an appointment would probably arouse in the mind of the former before very long.

Bellisle was too sensible a man not to perceive the force of this and other arguments which I brought forward; but he said he knew the Cardinal's burning ambition too well to hope that they would make any impression on him. As he could get nothing more out of me, he went to report what I had said to the Cardinal. Next day he came back with all sorts of offers on Dubois' part; he said he would not only consult me about public affairs, but he would undertake to be guided by my advice in a matter about which he knew I felt strongly, namely, the restoration of order in such things as personal rights and dignities, which had fallen into great confusion. I could not help laughing

within myself at these magnificent inducements ; apparently he thought me as easy to take in as Cardinal de Rohan, to whom he had given a solemn promise to make him Prime Minister, and who had been silly enough to believe him. However, these overtures on his part compelled me to relinquish the tactics I had hitherto employed ; the sole object of which was to secure for myself the privilege of the Normans, who can hardly ever be induced to reply plainly " yes " or " no " to anything. I said I would sound the Duke of Orleans the first time I saw him, namely, on my usual day for visiting him ; for if I went on a day when he was not accustomed to seeing me he would suspect at once that something unusual had brought me, and he would be on his guard. Though I said this chiefly to gain time, the Cardinal knew the suspicious nature of the Duke of Orleans so well that he agreed to my suggestion without any difficulty.

Accordingly I went to see the Duke of Orleans at my usual hour, four o'clock, taking with me some papers which I had to discuss with him. I found him moody and preoccupied ; as a rule, he grasped a point before one had finished explaining it, and delighted in making me angry by some ill-timed joke ; to-day he seemed quite dull, and asked me to repeat what I was saying. This gave me an opportunity of asking what was the matter ; he stammered, hesitated, and was unwilling to tell me. I asked if it had anything to do with a rumour I had heard that he thought of making Cardinal Dubois Prime Minister. He seemed rather relieved at my putting this question, and replied with a more open air that the Cardinal had set his heart upon it, and for his own part he was sick of Versailles ; he was worried all day by business, and did not know what to do with himself in the evenings ; he felt inclined therefore to throw some of his burden on to a Prime Minister, in order to have more time to himself and leisure to amuse himself at Paris. I laughed, and told him that his arguments were quite convincing, and there was nothing more to be said. He saw I was laughing at him, and said it was all very well for me, but I did not realise how hard he had to work all day, nor the intolerable boredom of his evenings ; for the Duchess of Orleans' circle was dull beyond belief, and he did not know where to go.

I said that, considering the terms on which I had been

with the Duchess ever since the *lit-de-justice*, I would say nothing of her; but I thought it a pity that, witty and well-informed as he was, and such good company when he chose, he could not find amusement elsewhere, if not in her drawing-room. I reminded him how the late Prince of Conti, to whom he was in no wise inferior, used to be always surrounded by a brilliant circle, in spite of the fact that to frequent his company was to risk incurring the displeasure of the King, who hated him. Whether at Versailles or in Paris, the Prince of Conti was never at a loss for agreeable company in the evening; even at Marly, where everything was under the immediate eye of the King, he no sooner appeared in the saloon than people flocked round him, and in conversing with him very often forgot their meal-times and the hour for presenting themselves before the King; he was an Orpheus whose lyre could allure even trees and rocks to follow him; and all this without appearing to take the slightest trouble about it. I asked the Duke of Orleans what there was to prevent him from playing the same part as the Prince of Conti? It seemed to me that he had only to prefer decent company to that in which he usually spent his evenings, and to realise that his supper-parties were a disgrace to any one over eighteen or twenty years of age. There was no reason, I said, why he should not have supper-parties at Versailles; plenty of agreeable and distinguished people would struggle for invitations to them provided they were assured they would not be offended by indecency, blasphemy, or drunkenness. I begged him to remember that for years I had refrained from saying anything about his private life; I only did so now because I saw that he was preparing a very dangerous situation for himself when the King should attain his majority: the more dangerous if he should allow the boredom of his evenings to disgust him with business in the daytime, and try to escape from it by the appointment of a Prime Minister.

My harangue was much longer than would be supposed from this summary, but the Duke of Orleans had the patience to hear me out, sitting with his elbows on the table and his face between his hands, as he always did when perplexed or embarrassed. As soon as I had finished he admitted that all I had said was true, adding that the worst of it was that women no longer attracted him, and that wine disgusted him. "Why, Sir," I said, "then you must be

possessed by a devil; you imperil your prospects both in this world and the next for the two allurements by which he seduces mankind, and yet you admit that you have grown weary of them. If you no longer care for wine or women, what pleasure can you find in your supper-parties except listening to conversation which would make any one else stop his ears? the wretched pleasure of a worn-out debauchee gloating over the recollections which the filthy talk around him awakes in his memory!"

I paused for a moment, and then proceeded to contrast this shameful state of things with the life he might lead, if he would content himself with such social pleasures as were suitable to his age, and the position he held in the State—a position which he ought to endeavour to retain when the King's minority was at an end, though no longer Regent. I asked him to consider the impression which would be made on the Court, on the whole of France, even on foreign nations, if they saw him practically abdicate an office which he had shown himself so capable of filling, and hand over his authority to another, merely that he might have more leisure for debauchery; to consider further what facilities he would give ambitious intriguers to persuade the young King to deprive him of the influence which he no longer cared to exercise, and relegate him to private life. I reminded him of the fate of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, who passed the last years of his life in neglect, solitude, and contempt at Blois, which he was forbidden to quit.

Here I paused, thinking I had said enough, perhaps too much. After a moment's silence the Duke of Orleans said, "Well, in that case I will go and plant my cabbages at Villers-Cotteret!" But, I said, who would guarantee that he would be allowed to plant them in peace, or even in safety? Was it not certain that his enemies would do all they could to find fault with the administration of the Government during his Regency, and accuse him of meditating dangerous plots? and was it not only too probable that they would instil into the King's dark mind suspicions regarding a Prince of his wit, courage, and capacity, the next heir to the Crown, who had long reigned under the name of Regent, and who must be deeply offended at the manner in which he was treated.

The Duke of Orleans took a few turns up and down the room with me in silence, after which he admitted that what

I had said merited reflection. Then, finding himself close to two *tabourets* against the wall (I can see the whole scene now), he took me by the arm and pulled me down on to one of them, taking the other himself. Turning to me, he asked me whether I did not remember seeing Dubois at the time when he was St. Laurent's servant, and thought himself lucky to be so; then he went on to recapitulate all the successive stages of Dubois' rise in life to that day. "And yet he is not content!" he went on, "he persecutes me to make him Prime Minister; and when I have done so, I am sure he will not be satisfied! What the devil can he want more? to make himself God Almighty, I suppose, if it were in his power." "You may be quite sure he would, Sir, if he could," I replied; "as you know him so well it is for you to decide whether you will allow him to make a mounting-block of you, in order to climb above your head!" "Oh! I will take care to prevent that," he said; and began walking up and down again. At last he sat down in his accustomed place at his writing-table, and remained silent for some minutes, his face hidden in his hands. Then, raising his head a little, he said in a feeble voice, casting a shamefaced look at me: "But why should I hesitate any longer? why not declare his appointment at once?" Such was the outcome of our conversation! "Ah, Sir!" I exclaimed, "what a thing to say! Why are you in such a hurry? Do, at any rate, take a little time to reflect on what I have said, and let me explain to you what a Prime Minister is, and what usually happens to a Sovereign who appoints one." I said this merely to obtain a little delay, for I felt that further argument was useless. After a pause he said: "Well, then, come here to-morrow at three o'clock, and we will talk the matter over again." And as I went out of the door he called after me: "Do not forget, three o'clock exactly!"

Next day, the 22nd of August, I kept my appointment punctually. "Well," said the Duke of Orleans at once, "what have we to say more about yesterday's business? It seems to me that we have already discussed it thoroughly, and the best thing I can do is to announce the Cardinal's appointment as Prime Minister at once." I started back at this declaration, and said it was very sudden, considering the importance of the business. He replied that he bore in mind all I had said, and had reflected on the subject;

but, after all, he was worried to death with business all day, and with boredom all the evening, and Cardinal Dubois never ceased persecuting him. I said that last consideration seemed to be the most powerful; and I was surprised that Dubois' pertinacious tactics should be so successful with His Royal Highness, considering his usually suspicious nature.

I would venture to point out two things: the first, that if he was determined to escape from the worries of business and seek amusement at the Opera and at his supper-parties, it was not in the least necessary to confer the formal appointment of Prime Minister on the Cardinal; for he was so practically already, and generally recognised as such; no one, Frenchman or foreign Minister, would think of speaking to His Royal Highness on business without first making sure of the Cardinal's approval. I could not see, therefore, that His Royal Highness would enjoy more liberty after the appointment than he had now, if he chose to exercise it. But it was quite evident, and this was the second point to which I desired to call his attention, that the appointment would make a very considerable difference in the position of Cardinal Dubois himself. At present, though he exercised all the functions of a Prime Minister, his hold over them was precarious; he was liable to be dismissed at any moment, without any embarrassing formalities; nothing more was necessary than to send a Secretary of State to seal up his papers, and dismiss him to his diocese, at the same time warning foreign Ministers and the Secretaries of State not to take any business to him for the future. Now, though it was true that the patent of Prime Minister was no safeguard against dismissal, it was one thing to be able to send him off at a moment's notice, and quite another to revoke his patent with the necessary formalities of registration in the Parliament and so on, which would involve considerable delay, and give him time for intrigues, and, possibly, to procure a reconciliation.

To any other Prince than the Duke of Orleans I would have said something about the danger of formally appointing a man like Dubois, who was quite capable of insinuating himself into the confidence of an inexperienced child like the King, and induce him to banish the late Regent, as Mazarin had contrived to get rid of Gaston. But the Duke of Orleans was so completely under his spell that it was

useless to say such things to him ; and besides, although I had said nothing personally offensive to Cardinal Dubois, I had already risked enough by opposing his appointment, for I was at the mercy of the Duke of Orleans' weakness and indiscretion ; and I did not care to expose myself further. I said no more, therefore, but waited to hear what he would reply.

He took six or seven turns up and down the room, and then sat down opposite to me in his usual place, the writing-table between us. After a short silence he reminded me that I had promised to say something about the office of a Prime Minister. I said he was so well acquainted with the history of his own and other countries that he could not be ignorant of the evils which had arisen from the misgovernment and treachery of Ministers. I reminded him of Henry VIII of England and Cardinal Wolsey ; of Louis XI, the most crafty and suspicious of our Kings, who was betrayed by Cardinal Balue into the hands of the Duke of Burgundy ; for which crime, after he regained his liberty, he confined the Cardinal in an iron cage for many years, taking good care not to appoint a successor ; of Louis XII, twice brought to the verge of ruin by his Prime Minister, Cardinal d'Amboise, who sacrificed his master to his ambition for the Papal throne ; of the baleful administration of the Maréchal d'Ancre during the minority of Louis XIII ; of Mazarin, who thought of nothing but amassing wealth, and who in twenty years of public misery, of civil and foreign wars begun for the most part by himself, contrived to extort so much money from the people that he gave his niece the Duchess de Mazarin 28,000,000 livres as a marriage-portion, besides the immense sums he gave his other nieces.

These instances, I said, would show what Prime Ministers had been in all countries since the time of Louis XI, not to go further back ; among the whole number he would not find a single good one except Cardinal Ximénès, and perhaps Richelieu. A King who appoints one, I added, gives the strongest possible proof of his own weakness or incapacity, often of both ; he places himself in a most unenviable position ; he is justly held responsible for the acts of the Government, yet he has no real control over it ; if things go well, his Minister gets the credit ; if the reverse, the blame is cast on him ; and yet he is too often kept in ignorance of the complaints and misery of his people. As time goes

on the Minister's power increases, he becomes indispensable to the King, who can no longer overthrow the colossus which he has himself set up; even if he does succeed in doing so the Minister's downfall is usually the signal for intrigues, cabals, and troubles of all kinds which make matters worse than they were before. "I trust Your Royal Highness will reflect on these suggestions," I said. "They will at any rate remind you of what Cardinals are capable; they will remind you of Mazarin's career, and I trust you will bear in mind that Dubois has advantages which Mazarin never had; their origin is equally obscure, but Dubois is a Frenchman born, whereas Mazarin knew nothing of France, and could never speak our language."

My discourse was a long one; it was succeeded by a long silence. After a time he rose and began walking up and down, without saying a word. What were my astonishment and confusion when he spoke at last! He stopped suddenly; and, looking at me sideways with a sort of shamefaced expression, said in a moody, dejected voice: "I must make up my mind one way or the other. I think I had better announce his appointment at once!" "Sir," I replied, "you are just and wise; and, above all, you are the master. Is there anything I can do for you at Meudon?" And with that I made my bow and walked out. He called after me: "But you will let me see you again soon; will not you?" I took no notice, but shut the door behind me. Outside, in the antechamber where Marshal de Villeroy had been arrested, I found the faithful Bellisle, who had been waiting patiently there for two good hours, as he had waited during my previous interview with the Duke of Orleans. He seized me by the arm, whispering, "Well, how are matters going?" "As well as possible," I replied, controlling my feelings to the best of my ability. "I think I may say that the Cardinal's appointment will be announced immediately." "Capital!" he said. "I will go at once and make him a happy man." I entrusted him with no message of congratulation, but hastened to take refuge at Meudon.

Next day, the 23rd of August, the Duke of Orleans announced that he had appointed Dubois Prime Minister, and formally presented him to the King. About four in the afternoon Conches came over to Meudon, sent expressly by Cardinal Dubois, to announce the news to me, as a mark,

he said, of esteem for the man to whom he was solely indebted for this great favour. I was very much astonished, and replied drily that I was much obliged to the Cardinal for attributing to me so large a share in his promotion, but nobody knew better than he how little assistance he required from any one else. Conches, without any message beyond this, returned to Versailles, and although it was still so early I put off going there to congratulate the Cardinal till next day. I saw plainly that he meant to reconcile public opinion to his appointment by quoting me as having advocated it; although it is impossible to believe that he had not heard from the Duke of Orleans all that had passed in our conversations. Indeed, his expressions of gratitude to me soon caused this report to spread all over the town and Court. Fortunately we were both pretty well known; and I took care to tell my friends and several other persons of distinction that I was far from having had any share in the Cardinal's elevation.

I went to Versailles next morning, where I was evidently expected, for I was waylaid on my arrival by an officer of the Cardinal's household, who asked me to go in by the little courtyard, as I should find his master at the entrance of the *caveau*. This *caveau* was a little dark room, with an artificial recess, which Monseigneur had used as a bedroom in winter; a narrow dark staircase led from it up to the King's apartments on the first floor. I found Cardinal Dubois in a little anteroom between the courtyard and the *caveau*; only Leblanc and Bellisle were with him. I do not know why he chose this place to receive me, unless it was that he preferred a private place for our meeting lest his protestations of gratitude should be belied by any coldness on my part. He greeted me with great effusion, did his best to persuade me that it was I who had made him Prime Minister, for which he should be eternally grateful; and protested that he would have no secrets from me, and do nothing without my advice. Not being quite so credulous as Cardinal de Rohan, I was not taken in by this fine language; I replied by such compliments and congratulations as I could bring myself to utter; but I would not admit that I had anything to do with his promotion; and let him see that his bait of giving me a share in the administration had no attractions for me. He was quite beside himself with joy. He took me by the back way to the

Duke of Orleans' room, and, he, though rather embarrassed, gave me a cordial reception. Nothing was said about the appointment of a Prime Minister; and as soon as I could I cut short the conversation and went off to breathe freely at Meudon.

The appointment was received with general disapproval throughout France. The new Prime Minister had expected this; but he had got what he wanted, and could afford to laugh at the clamours of the public.

Shortly afterwards it was announced that a marriage had been arranged between the Infant Don Carlos, the third son of the King of Spain, but his eldest by his second marriage, and Mademoiselle de Beaujolais, fifth daughter of the Duke of Orleans. The preliminary negotiations were conducted with such secrecy that the announcement was quite unexpected; it caused general surprise, and the enemies of the Duke of Orleans were much displeased. The Princess was only eight years old, and the Infant a year younger. He was the child for whom the Queen of Spain was so anxious to secure the succession to the Duchies of Parma and Piacenza, and, if possible, to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany; and she thought by this marriage she might obtain the support of France for his claims, which would certainly meet with opposition on the part of the Emperor and the King of Sardinia.

CHAPTER XXVIII

1722

Approach of the King's Coronation—The dignity of the Peers—I ask for a written promise that their precedence be respected at the Coronation—This being refused, I and many others fail to attend the Coronation—The Coronation takes place shorn of its proper ceremonial—Death of Madame, and of Madame la Princesse—I see less and less of the Duke of Orleans, who is completely controlled by Dubois—The King's majority and the honours list—Three new Dukes—Marriage of the Comte de Toulouse—The privilege of the *entrées*—Dubois persuades the Regent to recall the patents—The familiar *entrées* granted to the Bastards—The Peers protest—Dubois and Father d'Aubenton—Le Blanc is forced to retire and Breteuil is appointed Secretary for War—A strange story—Death of D'Aubenton—Death of Dubois—His career—Anecdotes about him—The King appoints the Duke of Orleans Prime Minister in his stead.

The time of the King's coronation was approaching. From the fashion in which all ceremonial observances had been managed during the Regency I foresaw that the coronation, a ceremony in which the Peers have always played a prominent part, would be to them a source of mortification and injustice. A deadly blow had been struck at them by the edict of 1711, which appointed the Princes of the Blood, and next to them, the King's bastards and their descendants, to represent the ancient Peers in the act of coronation, in preference to others. I knew too well the ignorance and ill-will of the Grand Master of the Ceremonies, and the pride of Cardinal Dubois, who wished to abase all other ranks in order to exalt the Cardinals, to doubt that the rest of the ceremonies would be conducted in the same spirit. Though I was well aware that the Duke of Orleans, on principle, always favoured confusion of ranks, I spoke to him on the subject; but, through all his embarrassment and hesitating replies, I perceived that his mind was made up.

Cardinal Dubois, hearing from him that I was dissatisfied, made approaches to me, for he feared what actually happened; what he wanted was to induce the Peers to attend,

and then leave them among the crowd. He asked me to state what I thought ought to be done; and, after consulting with other Dukes, I told him. He stammered out some generalities about the dignity of the Peers, and said it was only right, and even essential, that they should take a prominent part in the ceremony; but he would not commit himself to anything definite. I said I could never advise my colleagues to attend the coronation if they were to be slighted and their order degraded; if the Duke of Orleans wished to see them there, a definite statement of the treatment to be accorded to them must be drawn up in duplicate and signed by him; and further, he must send precise injunctions to the Grand Master of the Ceremonies to carry out these arrangements to the letter. Dubois, who had no intention of being bound down in this way, protested, saying that surely a verbal promise was as good as a signed agreement. I replied that what had happened in the affair of the cap had taught the Dukes the value of the most solemn and repeated promises on the part of the Regent; and he must either give it in writing or dispense with the attendance of persons whom he evidently regarded as useless except to swell his train.

The Cardinal did his best to gain me over; even the Duke of Orleans himself tried to persuade me to attend; at last, seeing that they would not prevail, Dubois asked me to promise, at least, that I would not dissuade the other Dukes from attending. I contented myself with saying that, as had unfortunately been too clearly proved already, my colleagues were not always guided by me, but I well knew what they ought to do on this occasion. I had, however, previously made sure, with less difficulty than I had anticipated, that not a single Peer would go to Reims except those who were obliged to do so on duty; and this was faithfully carried out. Four or five days before the ceremony I took my leave of the Duke of Orleans and Cardinal Dubois and went off to La Ferté. They did their best to dissuade me, and, finding me obstinate, begged me at least to return for some superb festivities which the Duke of Orleans was giving to the King at Villers-Cotterets. I replied modestly that, not being allowed to take part in the solemnities of Reims, I should find myself very much out of place at Villers-Cotterets, and stood firm in spite of their entreaties. The other Dukes had all agreed not to

attend these festivities, except on duty; and they kept their words. I did not return from La Ferté till ten days or a fortnight after the coronation.

As I had foreseen, the ceremonies were conducted without any regard for propriety or historical precedent. There was evidently a design to exclude all men of dignity and nobility as far as possible in favour of the gown; to assure oneself of this it was only necessary to look through the list of persons who were commanded to attend; not a single nobleman was invited except such as had to exercise functions incompatible with inferior rank. I do not know what offence had been given to the bastards, but neither the Duke of Maine nor his sons were present, and the Count de Toulouse, who was specially requested to attend, refused flatly and remained at Rambouillet.

I will note only one or two instances of the manner in which the ancient ceremonial forms were curtailed on this occasion. From time immemorial the nave of the cathedral has been thrown open to the people, that is, to the classes composing the third Order; they are there, as they used formerly to be in the open-air assemblies, to give their consent to the resolutions passed by the other two Orders, the Clergy and the Nobility. As soon as the King in his place, the Archbishop of Reims turns to the assembly and demands the assent of the nation; it is true that for centuries past this has been an empty ceremony, but it has always been kept up, and to make it complete the nave ought to be thronged with people; but on this occasion they were not admitted till after the King had been enthroned.

There are two crowns used at the coronation, the ancient crown of Charlemagne, which is too large to be worn on the head, and a smaller one, enriched with jewels, which is made purposely to fit the King. The large crown is held over the King's head by the twelve Peers, while the Archbishop goes through the ceremony of crowning him, and afterwards while he proceeds to take his seat on the throne. Then each Peer in succession kisses the King on the cheek, and turning to the people, cries, "Long live King Louis XV!" to which they reply with a shout of "Long live the King!" A number of birds are kept in a cage, and as each Peer utters his exclamation a twelfth part of them are liberated, while the twelfth part of a sum of money is thrown

to the people. On this occasion this interesting ceremony was omitted for the first time. It would be an endless task to specify all the other omissions and mistakes that were made; I prefer to say nothing about them; nor will I attempt to describe the superb festivities which the Duke of Orleans and M. le Duc gave the King at Villers-Cotterets and Chantilly on his return from Reims.

Madame, whose health had always been robust, had not been feeling well for some time. She wished very much to be present at the coronation, because the Duchess of Lorraine was to be there with her children, and as Madame had never yet seen these grandchildren she did not wish to lose this opportunity. But the state of her health made her hesitate; in this emergency she consulted her friend the Maréchale de Clérembault, who believed she had the gift of foretelling the future by means of little dots. I will not attempt to explain this operation, for, thank God, I know nothing about it; but Madame was a firm believer in it. The Maréchale replied, "You can go, Madame, with perfect confidence; I feel quite well." She thought she had discovered by her little dots that Madame would survive her, though not for long. So Madame went to Reims some days before the ceremony, and had the satisfaction of seeing her daughter and grandchildren. But soon after her return she lost the Maréchale de Clérembault, who died on the 27th of November, in her eighty-ninth year. Madame was deeply grieved, and, remembering the prediction, was alarmed for herself. In fact, she followed her friend within a fortnight; dropsy set in, and she died at St. Cloud on the 8th of December, having received all the Sacraments with great firmness and piety. She was in her seventy-first year.

Madame was more like a man than a woman; strong and courageous, and German to the backbone. She was thoroughly straightforward and outspoken; kind-hearted and generous; noble and dignified in her way of thinking, though extremely touchy regarding what was due to her. She was extremely shy, and disliked company, shutting herself up continually to write letters; her manners were rough; she took dislikes easily, and could say very sharp things; nor was she by any means particular to whom she said them. Though she had plenty of ability, her mind was wanting in flexibility, and she never understood the art

of making herself agreeable ; she had the appearance and manners of a Swiss ; and yet with all this she was capable of a warm and lasting friendship. The Duke of Orleans, though he never let her influence him, respected her and loved her tenderly. He never left her bedside during her illness, and was deeply grieved by her death. The following day I spent several hours alone with him, and I saw him weep bitterly.

Quite at the end of the year the famous Princess des Ursins died at Rome, where she had been living for the last six years ; preferring to govern the little English Court there rather than have nothing to govern at all. She was eighty-five years of age, still fresh-looking, upright, and lively ; her mind as clear as at fifty, and her health perfect till within a very short time of her death. I have said so much about this remarkable and illustrious lady that I need add nothing now.

The end of the year 1723, on which we are now entering, is the epoch which I have prescribed for the close of these Memoirs ; what remains of them will fall far short of the copiousness and interest of previous years. I was indignant at the manner in which the coronation had been conducted ; I saw that the time was rapidly approaching when the bastards would be restored to their former greatness ; I could not bear to see the Regent under the domination of his unworthy Minister, and the State given over as a prey to the greed, folly, and ambition of that wretch. It was only with repugnance that I went near the Duke of Orleans, that unfortunate Prince with so many splendid talents buried and rendered useless ; I felt with regard to him the disgust which the rebellious Israelites in the desert expressed about their manna : *nauseabat anima mea super cibum istum levissimum.* I hardly condescended to speak to him ; he noticed it, and I could see that he was hurt ; he tried to win me back ; sometimes from mere force of habit he spoke to me about public affairs, but very superficially and with obvious constraint. I hardly took the trouble to answer him, and cut short my audiences as much as possible, listening coldly to his reproaches on the subject. What could I have to talk about with a Regent who, far from governing the kingdom, could not even govern himself !

When I saw Cardinal Dubois he treated me almost

with deference; he wanted to get rid of me, but did not know how to set about it; he realised that the old ties of friendship between the Duke of Orleans and myself were still too strong for him to think of sending me into banishment like the Duke de Noailles and Canillac; his only hope was that he might disgust me by imposing silence on his master with regard to public affairs. I continued, therefore, to lead my accustomed life, seeing the Duke of Orleans in private, but at longer and longer intervals as time went on; never speaking to him about serious matters, and rather discouraging him than otherwise when he touched on them of his own accord. Such being my feelings and mode of life, it will be easily understood that my narrative of this year will not possess the interest and instruction to be found in good Memoirs; it will be a dry, sterile record of events such as one finds in the newspapers.

Madame la Princesse died on the 13th of February, aged seventy-five. She and Madame were first cousins, granddaughters of the Elector-Palatine, son-in-law to James I, King of England, who aspired to the throne of Bohemia and lost all his estates and his electoral dignity in consequence. Madame la Princesse left immense wealth. She was ugly, crooked, and hump-backed; her ability was very slender, but she was pious and virtuous, with a gentle and patient disposition which sustained her during the forty-five years of her married life. After she became a widow she rebuilt the little Luxembourg in a very sumptuous style; but when one went to see her, one was shown up the back-stairs, through a wretched little dining-room into a private room. Beyond this was a suite of magnificent apartments, but nobody ever saw them. She was buried at the Carmelite convent in the Rue St. Jacques.

The approach of the King's majority set a good many people in motion in hopes of obtaining some mark of distinction. The Duke of Orleans let it be known that he was thinking of creating the Marquis de Biron, his first equerry, a Duke and Peer; and other aspirants to that dignity immediately began to bestir themselves. The Prince de Talmont was one, but, in spite of the fact that he was first-cousin to Madame, he was unsuccessful. The Princess of Conti teased the Duke of Orleans till he consented to make her cousin La Vallière a Duke, although, as he told me himself, he had granted him the reversion of his governorship

of the Bourbonnais for his son on the express understanding that the Princess should ask no more favours for her cousin. I succeeded, though with great difficulty, in obtaining the same distinction for the Marquis de Lévi, the late Duke de Chevreuse's son-in-law. So these three were created Dukes in the following order: Biron, Lévi, La Vallière. The first two were very superior to the third; there had already been dukedoms in their families, their birth and distinguished services were considered to justify their promotion; but that of La Vallière, though he was generally popular, was received with such universal disapproval that the Duke of Orleans was rather ashamed of himself.

On the 13th of February the King received the congratulations of the Duke of Orleans and the whole Court on the attainment of his majority; and on the 22nd he held a *lit-de-justice* at the Tuileries, at which his coming of age was duly declared and registered. The three new Dukes took their seats on this occasion.

Some time before this the Count de Toulouse had formed an attachment for the Marquise de Gondrin, of whom he had seen a good deal during a visit to the waters of Bourbon. She was sister to the Duke de Noailles, and widow of d'Antin's eldest son, by whom she had two sons. She had been a Lady of the Palace for a short time before the death of the Dauphiness, being then young, gay, and a thorough Noailles; she had a pleasing face and a very beautiful figure, and her character had never been attacked by scandal. The mutual attachment between her and the Count de Toulouse resulted in their engagement, but it was kept a dead secret. The day chosen for the marriage ceremony was that on which the *lit-de-justice* was held; for the Count de Toulouse, like the other bastards, refused to attend these functions because they were not allowed to cross the floor like the Princes of the Blood. The Maréchale de Noailles accompanied her daughter to the archiepiscopal residence, where the Count de Toulouse was in waiting, attended only by d'O; Cardinal de Noailles, after saying Mass, married them in his private chapel, and they returned to their respective homes. It was a long time before people even suspected what had happened, for the Count de Toulouse had always seemed to have an aversion for matrimony.

The Duke of Orleans, who held court distinctions in

contempt and was always too ready to give to any one who asked, had by degrees granted the privileges of the "grand" and "first" *entrées* to so many persons, and with so little discrimination, that they had ceased to be a distinction. I have described these *entrées* elsewhere. The chief advantage attaching to them was that the persons entitled to them could obtain a private audience of the King without asking for it previously. This did not suit the policy of Cardinal Dubois, who hoped to obtain the same ascendancy over the King's mind as he had established over that of the Regent, and by no means wished him to be easily accessible to others. He therefore persuaded the Duke of Orleans to recall all the patents granting these *entrées*, on the ground that they would prove a serious annoyance to the King. I was among the number of those who suffered; I sent in my patent directly it was asked for, without condescending to expostulate; I did not even say a word about it to the Duke of Orleans, who would have been much embarrassed if I had. The only brevet-holders spared, except the few who had received them from the late King, were Marshal Berwick, whom Dubois wished to conciliate till he could get rid of him by sending him as Ambassador to Spain, and Bellisle, whom he meant to involve in Leblanc's ruin, but whom in the meantime he wished to deceive. He was disappointed in both cases; Berwick never went to Spain, and Bellisle, after a long and rigorous imprisonment, followed by banishment, returned to Court and rose to prodigious heights.

The Cardinal appropriated for himself the familiar *entrées* which in the late King's time had been reserved for Monseigneur, his sons, the Duke of Orleans, and the two bastards; but, to conciliate public opinion, he extended them to all Princes of the Blood, to M. du Maine and his sons, and to the Count de Toulouse. These *entrées* carried the right of access to the King at any time when he was not actually engaged in business. This paved the way for the restoration of the bastards and M. du Maine's children to all the honours and distinctions which they had enjoyed at the King's death except the succession to the Crown, the title of Prince of the Blood, and the privilege of crossing the floor at sittings of the Parliament. The restoration was effected by a royal declaration duly registered by the Parliament. One would think the bastards had every reason to be satisfied with this.

after their previous degradation; but it was not so, and the Duchess of Orleans was even more angry than her brothers; the fact is, the three points refused were precisely those on which they had set their hearts; and moreover, they wished their privileges to be extended to their posterity for all generations. This, however, Dubois dared not grant for fear of offending the Princes of the Blood. We Peers made a formal protest, the last resource of the oppressed. This event completed the breach between Cardinal Dubois, the Duke of Orleans, and myself; though I did not take the trouble to say a single word on the subject to either of them, knowing it to be perfectly useless.

At this time Cardinal Dubois was in correspondence with Father d'Aubenton, to procure a return of the King of Spain's good-will towards Marshal Berwick, and his consent to receive him as Ambassador to Spain; for, in spite of my warnings, he still clung to this plan for getting rid of the Marshal, whose familiar friendship with the Duke of Orleans aroused his jealousy. He had promised a rich abbey to a brother of Father d'Aubenton's who lived at Paris, but he was in no hurry to give it him; he held it in suspense to stimulate the Jesuit's efforts to overcome the reluctance of the King of Spain. The negotiations did not last long; Father d'Aubenton had to report plainly to the Cardinal that he found the King inflexible. Shortly afterwards the brother called on the Cardinal to remind him of the promised abbey; Dubois told him in the most filthy terms to be off, adding that there was no abbey for him, and forbidding him ever to show his face again in his presence; at the same time he broke off all correspondence with Father d'Aubenton for the rest of his life. The effect of this outburst on a Jesuit accustomed to be treated with respect by the Ministers of the greatest Powers in Europe may be imagined; it had, as we shall see, very unfortunate consequences.

Leblanc, who had been sent to the Bastille for his supposed share in the defalcations of La Jonchère, received orders to resign his office of Secretary of State and retire to Doux, a country-seat belonging to his son-in-law, some fifteen or twenty leagues from Paris; and Breteuil, Intendant of Limoges, was immediately appointed in his place. Everybody was sorry for this event; for Leblanc had never forgotten himself; invariably polite to the most

humble, he was careful to show respect where it was due, which was more than could be said for most persons in his position. He was always obliging ; gracious even when he was obliged to refuse a demand, explaining his reasons for doing so ; capable, clear-headed, and hardworking ; and he took pains to make himself acquainted with his subordinates. It may be said that his downfall aroused general indignation, though it had been long foreseen that Dubois was determined to ruin him, and that all the Duke of Orleans' friendship and the recollection of the many services he had received from Leblanc would go for nothing against the Cardinal, backed up as he was by M. le Duc, for private reasons connected with his mistress, Madame de Prie. But the public was still more surprised by the appointment of Breteuil, a comparatively young man, without any experience of military affairs, and generally supposed to think of nothing but his pleasures, to be Secretary for War ; especially as the Intendance which he had held was one of the most insignificant and worst-paid in the kingdom. But the secret reason for his promotion was to be found in the locality of this Intendance.

Cardinal Dubois had been married for many years, consequently his wife was in a very humble position. He paid her well to hold her tongue when he first accepted ecclesiastical benefices, but as he rose in the world he found her a serious embarrassment. Owing to his low birth, he had no prospect of advancement except in the Church, and he lived in terror lest she should spoil everything. His marriage had taken place in a parish church in the Limousin country. When he was nominated to Cambrai he took Breteuil into his confidence, and begged him to do his best to destroy the proofs of his marriage.

Breteuil was a clever fellow, and quickly perceived what great things might be in store for him if he succeeded in rendering Dubois a service of so delicate and important a character. Under the pretext of making a round of his district he went to the village where the marriage had taken place, timing himself to arrive after dark. There was no inn, so he went to the priest's house, and begged for hospitality, saying that he was tired and hungry after a long journey, and could go no farther. The worthy priest, delighted to be of service to so important a personage as the Intendant, prepared the best supper he could for his guest

and had the honour of sitting down to table with him, while his maid entertained Breteuil's servants in another room. Breteuil liked drinking; he pretended to find the priest's wine excellent, and the good man, charmed with his guest's affability, brought out more and helped him to drink it. Breteuil plied him with wine till he was perfectly drunk and could neither see nor stand. During the first part of the repast Breteuil had asked him whether his parish registers were in good order and how far back they went; and, under pretence of anxiety about thieves, he had found out where they were, and where the keys were kept; he now took advantage of the information so acquired. Unlocking a volume where the registers were kept, he selected the volume he required, cut the page containing Dubois' marriage neatly out, without the slightest regard for the interests of other people whose marriages were recorded on the same page, and put it in his pocket. Having locked up the cupboard and restored the keys to their place, he resumed his journey at the first peep of day, leaving the good priest to sleep off the effects of wine, and giving a few pistoles to the servant.

Then he went to the notary at Brives, who was in possession of the marriage-contract, and, by straining his official authority, compelled him to give it up. Having done this he sent for the wife and threatened her with all sorts of penalties if she ever breathed a word about her marriage, adding that it would be perfectly useless to claim her rights, for care had been taken to prevent her proving them, and she would simply be sent to prison as an impostor; while she should be well supplied with everything she could want if she agreed to hold her tongue. He then sent the two important documents to Dubois, and was rewarded not long afterwards by being appointed Secretary of State. The wife dared not say a word. She came to Paris after her husband's death, and received a considerable share of the immense wealth he left behind him. She had no children, and survived her husband more than twenty years. This story became known after a time, and was never contradicted by any one.

Father d'Aubenton, confessor to the King of Spain, died on the 7th of August, aged seventy-six. He was a Frenchman by birth, and had always shown a wish to please our Court, but Dubois' insults to himself and his brother made

him very angry, and he determined to make him repent his conduct. With this object he persuaded the King of Spain to choose as his confessor Father Bermudez, a Spanish Jesuit, who was appointed the day after d'Aubenton's death. Bermudez, a thorough Spaniard, hated France and all Frenchmen, and was secretly attached to the House of Austria and all the Italian cabal; subsequent events have shown that an appointment more pernicious to French interests could not have been made. D'Aubenton was one of the most frequent preachers in the King's chapel; I heard several of his sermons without understanding a word, for of course he preached in Spanish; but his voice, action, and delivery were those of a great preacher. It was said that his sermons were Father Bourdaloue's, translated word for word into Spanish. He could not have chosen better; but his own sermons were shorter.

Cardinal Dubois had not the satisfaction of hearing of his death, for he died himself three days afterwards. He had a disease of the bladder which he concealed as long as possible; but, having imprudently attended on horseback a review of the household troops before the King at Meudon, his symptoms became so menacing that he was forced to call in medical assistance. Still he persisted in trying to hoodwink the public; attended meetings of the Council whenever he could; and announced to the Ambassadors from time to time that he was going to Paris to see them, though he never went.

At last, on the 7th of August, he was so ill that the surgeons declared that nothing but an immediate operation could save his life, and that he must be carried to Versailles at once for that purpose from Meudon, where the Court was then established. This terrible announcement threw him into such a state that it was impossible to move him next day, but on the 9th he was taken to Versailles at five o'clock in the morning. After allowing him a short time to rest, the surgeons suggested that he should receive the Sacraments, and that the operation should be performed immediately afterwards. The Cardinal did not receive this suggestion peaceably; his temper had been furious ever since the review, and the prospect of an operation had not improved it; however, after a little delay, he sent for a priest from the town, with whom he spent a quarter of an hour. For so godly a man, so well prepared to face death

that was quite sufficient. Then it was proposed that he should receive the viaticum ; he said it was easy to talk like that, but there was a special ceremonial for Cardinals, and he must send to Cardinal Bissy at Paris to find out what it was. The attendants saw that this was only an excuse for delay, and, as the necessity for the operation was urgent, they begged him to submit to it at once ; whereupon he told them furiously to be off and leave him alone.

The doctors then sent to Meudon for the Duke of Orleans, who came at once, and asked them whether they thought the operation would be successful ; to which they replied that they could guarantee nothing, but that without one the patient had not two hours to live. On this the Duke of Orleans went to the Cardinal's room, and with some difficulty persuaded him to submit. The operation lasted only five minutes, during which the patient shrieked and raved terribly. The surgeons told the Duke of Orleans that, from the appearance of the wound and the matter which came from it, they thought badly of the patient's chance ; and in fact he died just twenty-four hours later, in the greatest despair, gnashing his teeth and cursing the doctors to the last.

Dubois was a remarkable example of the vicissitudes of life. His rise was slow ; he had to purchase it by long years of scheming, intriguing, anxiety, and labour. Suddenly fortune burst upon him and he enjoyed greatness, power, and unbounded riches ; but he enjoyed them only for four years, counting from his appointment as Secretary of State (for only two, dating from his Cardinalate and appointment as Prime Minister), then, at the age of sixty-six, when at the very height of his prosperity, everything was snatched away from him. When he died his influence over his master was boundless. To say that he was Prime Minister is nothing, he exercised the royal power and authority without check or hindrance ; he was a Cardinal, Archbishop of Cambrai, with seven abbeys ; he held the office of Superintendent of the Post Office ; and, as was clearly proved afterwards, he received a pension from the English Government of £40,000 a year. I have had the curiosity to reckon up what his income was, rather diminishing the revenue of his benefices to be on the safe side, and I find that it amounted to 1,534,000 livres, made up as follows :

	Livres
Archbishop of Cambrai	120,000
Other ecclesiastical benefices	204,000
Salary as Prime Minister	150,000
Salary as Superintendent of the Post Office	100,000
English pension at 24 livres in the £ ..	960,000
	1,534,000

I believe he also received, as a Cardinal, 20,000 livres from the clergy; but I am not certain of this. He made prodigious gains in Law's schemes; he spent a good deal of this money at Rome, to secure his nomination as Cardinal, but not all by any means. He left an immense quantity of beautiful silver and silver-gilt plate, valuable furniture, and rare jewels; besides a stable full of the finest horses in Europe. His table was always magnificent and supplied with the most exquisite dishes; and he did the honours very well, though he was himself very temperate in his diet. When we consider his humble origin, the prodigious height to which he rose, and how suddenly he was hurled down from it, we may apply to him the words of the psalmist: "I have seen the ungodly in great power, and flourishing like a green bay-tree. I went by, and lo! he was gone: I sought him, but his place could nowhere be found!"

Dubois left an elder brother, a very worthy man, to whom he had given one or two official appointments when he became Secretary of State. This brother came in for enormous wealth, but he was of a retiring disposition; and he had only one son, a Canon of St. Honoré, who led a very holy life and absolutely refused to accept any part of the inheritance. They spent a portion of it in erecting a handsome, though modest, monument to the Cardinal in the church of St. Honoré, where he lies buried, with a very Christian epitaph; the rest they gave to the poor, fearing lest it should entail a curse upon them.

There have been many instances of persons, some of them of low birth, attaining to prodigious heights of fortune and distinction; but surely none of them was so absolutely devoid of talent of any sort as Cardinal Dubois, if we except a certain genius for low and obscure intrigues. He was a man of very moderate capacity; his acquired knowledge

was nothing extraordinary; his exterior was vulgar, and he looked like a ferret; the depravity of his morals was such as to render any attempt at concealment hopeless, and he was liable to fits of fury which resembled the outbursts of a maniac. Nothing was sacred to him, nor could any engagement bind him; truth, honour, and uprightness of conduct he held in open scorn; he thought of nothing but himself and his own advancement, and indeed looked upon conduct based on any other motive as the merest folly. With all this he was, when his interest required it, gentle, humble, and fawning, full of compliments and flattery, yet he never succeeded in pleasing. His conversation, abrupt, disjointed, and involved even when he wished to make his meaning plain, was as disagreeable as everything about him; still, he could say funny things and tell amusing stories, but their effect was marred by his bad elocution, which would have been good enough but for the habitual stutter which he had at first adopted purposely, to give him time to consider what he should say. With such defects it is surprising that the only man he ever succeeded in pleasing should be the Duke of Orleans, himself so witty and gifted with such good taste, and so quick to discern men's characters. But Dubois obtained his ascendancy over him while he was yet a child, and confirmed it when he was growing into a young man, by encouraging him in licence and debauchery.

One might fill a volume with a relation of the eccentricities of Cardinal Dubois; they were well known, for, after he had attained to the height of his power, he no longer took the trouble to keep himself under restraint. I will content myself with mentioning a few, to serve as specimens. When in one of his furious fits of temper he would sometimes run round and round the room on the chairs and tables, without once setting foot to the ground; the Duke of Orleans told me himself that he had seen him do it on more than one occasion.

Madame de Conflans succeeded Madame de Cheverny as governess to the Duke of Orleans' daughters. Shortly afterwards the Duchess asked her whether she had paid a visit to Cardinal Dubois. Madame de Conflans replied that she had not; adding that she saw no reason why she should, as the situation which His Royal Highness had given her was entirely unconnected with public business. The

Duchess of Orleans said that, considering the Cardinal's confidential relations with the Regent, she ought to go; Madame de Conflans, however, still objected, saying that the Cardinal was a madman who insulted everybody, and she would not run the risk of similar treatment; for, though very polite, she was extremely proud and had a sharp tongue of her own. The Duchess of Orleans laughed at her fears, telling her that, as she would not have to ask any favour, but simply to thank him for the favour which the Regent had bestowed upon her, her alarm was groundless, for the Cardinal would be pleased with the compliment; finally, she said it was her wish that she should go.

So after dinner Madame de Conflans went to the Cardinal's rooms; he was speaking rather roughly to a woman, while eight or ten other persons were waiting their turn for an interview. This sight terrified Madame de Conflans, who was naturally a very small person, and now seemed to shrink almost to nothing; however, when the woman retired she ventured to go forward. The Cardinal, seeing her advance, asked abruptly what she wanted. "Monseigneur," she began. "Oh, Monseigneur, Monseigneur!" interrupted the Cardinal, "it cannot be done!" "But, Monseigneur," repeated Madame de Conflans. "By all the devils," broke in the Cardinal again, "when I say a thing cannot be done, it cannot; and there is an end of the matter!" "Monseigneur," said Madame de Conflans, trying to explain that she wanted nothing; whereupon the Cardinal took her by the shoulders, twisted her round, and gave her a push, saying, "Go to the devil, and leave me in peace!" She rushed off to the Duchess of Orleans in a fury, weeping bitterly, and managed to tell her story, in spite of the sobs which interrupted it. People were so accustomed to the Cardinal's peculiarities that this adventure seemed quite funny, and the story was received everywhere with shouts of laughter. This put the finishing touch to Madame de Conflans' exasperation; she vowed that never again would she set foot in the apartments of such a lunatic.

On the Easter Sunday after he became a Cardinal he woke up about eight o'clock, and, ringing his bell till he pulled the cord down, began blaspheming and using the most filthy language to his servants because they had not called him; he said he wanted to say Mass, and with all his business he did not know how to find time for it. However, after this

excellent beginning of the day he did not say Mass after all, the best thing he could do ; indeed, I do not know that he ever did say it after his consecration.

His private secretary, Venier, had been with him twenty years, and did not mind what he said to him. One morning the Cardinal asked for some paper which could not be found immediately, whereupon he began storming and cursing at the negligence of his clerks ; if he had not enough, he said, he would engage twenty, fifty, a hundred more, and so he went on raving. As Venier listened quietly and said nothing the Cardinal turned to him and asked whether it was not shameful that he should be so badly served, considering what expense he was put to ; and went off into a fresh outburst. "Monseigneur," said Venier, "you need only engage one extra clerk ; let it be his sole business to do all your cursing and blaspheming for you ; you will then have plenty of spare time, and your business will be better done!" The Cardinal burst out laughing, and calmed down.

Every night he had a chicken cooked for his supper, which he always ate alone. One day, by some mistake, the chicken was forgotten ; as he was going to bed he thought of it, and, ringing his bell, began storming at his servants, who replied coolly that he had eaten his chicken, but if he would like another they would put it on the spit at once. "What!" he said, "I have already eaten it?" They persisted so calmly in their assertion that in the end he believed them, and went to bed supperless.

All business was in arrears under his management ; he would not even take the trouble to open his letters. On one occasion he threw an immense quantity of them into the fire, unopened, and then exclaimed joyfully that he had now brought his correspondence up to date. At his death thousands of letters were found with their seals unbroken.

I have said enough to show what sort of man was this extraordinary personage, whose death came as a relief to every one who had to do business with him throughout Europe. No one was more relieved than the Duke of Orleans, who had long groaned under the chains which he had forged for himself. He was afraid of the Cardinal ; he longed to get rid of him, but he did not know how to set about it ; he was isolated, surrounded by spies, and had no one in whom he could confide.

As soon as the Cardinal was dead the Duke of Orleans

waited on the King to inform him of what had happened. The King at once begged him to take charge of public affairs, and appointed him Prime Minister ; the patent was made out immediately, and he took the oaths next day. This prompt appointment was due to the fears of the Bishop of Fréjus, who did not at all wish to see it held by a private person. As we have seen, the King was fond of the Duke of Orleans, whereas he had always disliked Dubois, in spite of his efforts to ingratiate himself. The Cardinal persevered in these to the last, but his artificial and disagreeable manner was against him ; and, besides that, he had two enemies who were determined to set the King against him—Marshal de Villeroy so long as he was there, and, more dangerous still, the Bishop of Fréjus. The latter had quite made up his mind to overthrow the Cardinal in case anything happened to the Duke of Orleans, for he was determined not to submit to the domination of a private person ; he therefore lost no opportunity of prejudicing the King against Dubois, and establishing his own influence.

CHAPTER XXIX

1723

Death of Mesmes—I visit the Duke of Orleans again—Ecclesiastical appointments for notorious profligates—The Abbess of Chelle protests—I visit the Duke of Orleans early one morning and am horrified at his condition—His doctor's warnings—I confer with the Bishop of Fréjus and advise him to secure the King's consent to his appointment as Prime Minister in the event of the Duke of Orleans' sudden death—Fréjus refuses on the Duke de Bourbon's account. Death of the Duke de Lausun—The story of his life.

A MAN more corrupt, if possible, than Cardinal Dubois followed him to the grave, about a fortnight afterwards; I mean the First-President Mesmes, who died of apoplexy at the age of sixty-one. I call him more corrupt than Dubois because, having inherited wealth and an honourable station in life, he was not obliged like him to build up his own fortune; not that this is any excuse for Dubois, but Mesmes was not exposed to the same temptations, and had merely to enjoy his position in an honourable way. I have said enough of this hateful and contemptible magistrate, and need not sully my paper by any further comments on his character. I have already explained how I had been forced into a reconciliation with him on the occasion of the Duke de Lorge's marriage with his daughter. I had been spending a couple of months in pleasant company at La Ferté, paying no attention to the entreaties of Bellisle and others who wrote urging me to return after Dubois' death. Now came another appeal from the late First-President's daughters, who wished me to see the Duke of Orleans, and induce him to grant them a pension. On this occasion the piety and family affection of Madame de Saint-Simon, who would not hear of my refusing to do them this service, prevailed; and I started for Paris, whither she followed me a few days later.

I went to see the Duke of Orleans at Versailles; as soon as I entered the room he came to meet me in a very cordial

manner, saying that he hoped I was not going to abandon him. I replied that so long as his Cardinal was alive I had not thought I could do any good by seeing him, and had taken the opportunity to enjoy a little leisure; but now that obstacle was removed I should be always at his service. He made me promise to resume our old relations, and, without saying anything about the Cardinal, began explaining the position of public affairs, foreign and domestic. He was lively and cheerful; and, as it seemed to me, glad to get back to work again. After a little conversation I mentioned the petition of the late First-President's daughters for a pension; he scoffed at the idea, after the immense sums which their father, whose character he summed up very justly, had succeeded in extorting from him, and laughed at me for advocating their cause. I am free to confess that I did not plead it very warmly; their request seemed to me preposterous, and it was no concern of mine. From this time my relations with the Duke of Orleans were on their old footing, as they had been before Dubois was made Prime Minister.

About this time the Duke of Orleans had several rich ecclesiastical appointments to distribute. The Duke-Bishop of Laon was translated to Cambrai; he had never taken his seat in Parliament as a Peer; he was the Duke of Orleans' natural son by the actress Florence; but his father had never acknowledged him, and this formed an insuperable bar to his reception by the Parliament, because on those occasions it is necessary for a man to prove who he is. The appointment of his successor at Laon gave great offence: it was conferred on a brother of La Fère, but totally unlike him. The new Bishop was a notorious rascal and profligate; no one would speak to him; the Duke of Orleans told me himself that he had turned him out of the Palais-Royal for stealing fifty pistoles which he had entrusted to him to carry to Madame de Polignac. I name her because her debaucheries were so public that I think I can do so without offending against charity or discretion. This good Bishop was also literally kicked out of the Tuileries by the Musketeers and other young men, who chased him as far as the Pont-Royal amid the shouts and applause of the footmen assembled about the gates; and the Captains of both Musketeer corps forbade them, in regimental orders, to have anything to do with him. To extricate himself from his

painful position this scum of the earth pretended to be converted and repentant, and tried to enter the priesthood. After being rebuffed by several Bishops, he found one at last, of morals similar to his own, who consented to ordain him ; I will not mention the name of this scandalous prelate. La Fère then became a fanatical supporter of the Constitution, and so obtained the protection of the Jesuits and of Cardinal Bissy. Finally, he became Bishop of Viviers, to the general scandal, and was now promoted to Laon.

The Duke of Orleans received a letter from his daughter the Abbess of Chelles on the subject of these ecclesiastical appointments which produced a great effect upon him ; it was admirably written, remonstrating with him on his choice of such men for holy offices, and threatening him with God's anger. He was sufficiently moved to talk about the letter, and even to allow it to be read ; I do not know whether he would have profited by it if he had had the opportunity. But the opportunity was denied him.

The Duke d'Humières was staying with me at Meudon, and he wished me to take him to Versailles to thank the Duke of Orleans for bestowing on him, at my request, the governorship of Boulogne and the surrounding district, vacant by the death of the Duke d'Aumont. We drove over in the morning ; the Duke of Orleans had not finished dressing, and, as I did not wish the Duke d'Humières to be kept waiting, I went in to ask him to come into the room where he received visitors. I found him in his *caveau*, the recess which he had converted into a dressing-room, surrounded by his valets. I was horrified at his appearance ; his face was purple, his head hung down, he had a stupefied look, and he did not even notice my entrance. His servants called his attention to me ; he turned slowly towards me, and asked in a thick utterance what brought me. I told him ; but I was so struck by what I saw that I forgot what I had intended to say. I took Simiane, his first Gentleman of the Chamber, aside, and expressed my surprise at seeing the Duke of Orleans in such a condition. He said there was nothing unusual in it ; for some time past he had been like that in the morning, and if I was surprised it was only because I was not in the habit of seeing him so early ; adding that he would be all right when he was thoroughly roused and had finished dressing. But he was by no means restored to his usual appearance when he came out to receive the

Duke d'Humières; he listened to his speech of thanks with a dull, stupid look; and, though usually so gracious and polite, and knowing so well how to say the proper thing on all occasions, he scarcely uttered a word in reply.

The sight of the Duke of Orleans in this condition made me reflect seriously about the future. Some time ago the Secretaries of State had told me that in the early morning they could have got his signature to any document they pleased, however prejudicial to his own interests. This was the consequence of his suppers. During the past year I had noticed that he sometimes left the room when I was with him, and he explained that Chirac was always giving him purging medicines, because he was so full that when he sat down to supper it was without appetite, although he had taken no nourishment during the day except a cup of chocolate between one and two in the afternoon. I remonstrated with him about this *régime*, but of course it was perfectly useless. I knew also that Chirac had warned him that if he did not alter his habits he would either have an apoplectic stroke, or fall into a dropsical condition; for his breathing was already affected at times; to which he replied that he hoped he would not suffer from a lingering, suffocating disease like dropsy; he would prefer being struck down suddenly by apoplexy, without warning and without having time to think of death. Any one else, after such a warning, would have changed his mode of living, in which case, with his strong constitution, he might have had a long life, and in his situation a very agreeable one; but this unfortunate Prince was doubly blind to his own welfare.

At that time I was on very intimate terms with the Bishop of Fréjus; and since, if the Duke of Orleans died, we must have a master other than the King till such time as he should be able or willing to assume the government himself, I thought I should prefer that prelate to any one else. I went to him at once, and told him that, from what I had noticed that morning, I thought the Duke of Orleans had not long to live, and that his death would come without any warning; I advised him, therefore, to take steps at once to secure the King's consent to his appointment as Prime Minister as soon as the office became vacant; in which he would probably find no difficulty, for he could not doubt the King's affection for him, and he had constant opportunities for talking to him alone.

Fréjus seemed pleased at my giving him this warning and advice; but he was cautious, and said modestly that the position of Prime Minister was too high for him, at present at any rate. This was not the first time we had discussed the subject, though I had never before mentioned it as requiring immediate decision. He said he had reflected carefully, and had come to the conclusion that only a Prince of the Blood could become Prime Minister without arousing any public murmurs; in fact, he thought there could be no choice, it must be M. le Duc. I protested against the appointment of a Royal Prince as dangerous, reminding him that the late King had always refused to admit any of the Princes of the Blood to his councils, for fear of aggrandising them; I reminded him also how, since the King's death, these Princes had pillaged the finances, and how obstinately they had protected Law and sustained the abuses which favoured their depredations; I added that M. le Duc, in particular, would not make a good Prime Minister, for he was stupid, extremely obstinate, and influenced by persons as greedy as himself, who would certainly not let slip their opportunities.

Fréjus listened to all this quietly, with a gentle smile; when I had finished he said there was some truth in what I had urged, but there was much good in M. le Duc, who was upright and honourable, and had always been on friendly terms with himself. Moreover, since M. le Duc had not taken advantage of his opportunities as superintendent of the King's education to win the boy's affection and confidence, he would be obliged to have recourse to those who were in a more fortunate position; and so all would be well. In short, the more he reflected on the subject the more convinced he was that there was no choice, and the appointment must be given to M. le Duc.

This declaration pulled me up short. I said no doubt he was in a better position to judge than I was; I had thought it right to tell him what I had noticed, and to make such representations as occurred to me. I was sorry that he should miss this opportunity of becoming Prime Minister; but, after all, I bowed to his superior judgement in such a matter. I need hardly say that he was profuse in assurances of gratitude, confidence, and friendship. I saw well enough that he only refused out of timidity; he was in reality greedy of power, but thought his time had not yet fully

come. His secret thought was that M. le Duc would prove unequal to his new position; that he would be forced to have recourse more and more to himself as the only person who possessed the King's entire confidence and affection; and so, before very long, he himself would be the real Prime Minister, while M. le Duc would become a mere figure-head. It was, of course, useless to argue with him if such were his settled design, so I said no more; I refrained from telling him that Madame de Prie and other satellites of M. le Duc would certainly upset his calculations, for their own profits would depend on his governing independently, and they would never allow him to fall under the yoke which M. de Fréjus thought he could impose upon him. I told all this the same evening to Madame de Saint-Simon, from whom I had no secrets and whose good sense has been of the greatest assistance to me through life; and her opinion entirely coincided with my own.

The Duke de Lausun died on the 19th of November, at the age of ninety years and six months; a most extraordinary personage in every way, quite unique; what La Bruyère says of him in his "Caractères" is perfectly true, that no one would dare to imagine such a career as his, even in a dream. He and I married two sisters, who were always on the most affectionate terms; when the Court went to Marly a special pavilion was always reserved for us four; and since the King's death scarcely a day had passed without our meeting the Lausuns at Paris; we were always dining at each others' houses. Consequently, I saw a great deal of him, and feel tempted to describe him at some length.

He was a scion of the house of Caumont, of which the family of the Duke de la Force has always been regarded as the elder branch, though their claim has been contested by the Lausuns. In person he was small, but well-proportioned; fair, with a clever, haughty countenance which inspired respect, though, as I have heard from his contemporaries, he never was good-looking. Full of ambition, fancies, and caprices, he was eaten up by jealousy, always overweening, never content. He knew nothing of literature, his mind was uncultivated, and there was nothing pleasant about his wit; he was by nature morose, touchy, and unsociable. His manner and conduct were always very noble; but his natural propensity to spitefulness and malice had increased with his jealousy and ambition; he was, however, a staunch

friend when, as seldom happened, he had a friend at all, and he was always kind to his relations; to the rest of mankind, even to those quite indifferent to him, he was an enemy, quick to spy out defects and cruelly clever in the art of making people look ridiculous. In person he was extremely brave, and his audacity was beyond belief. With all his mocking insolence as a courtier, he was indefatigable in schemes and intrigues; to gain his own ends he did not disdain to pay court even to servants; to Ministers he was dangerous, and his caustic and witty tongue, which spared nobody, caused him to be universally dreaded.

When he made his first appearance at Court as a penniless cadet from Gascony he received a kind welcome from Marshal de Grammont, his father's first-cousin, who was at that time a highly influential personage, commanding the regiment of Guards, and on a confidential footing with the Queen-Mother and Cardinal Mazarin. His son, the Count de Guiche, the leader of the fashionable youth and the general favourite of the ladies, introduced the Marquis de Puyguilhem, as Lausun was then called, to the circle of the Countess de Soissons, the Cardinal's niece, at that time the star of the Court, at whose house the King was to be found all hours. The King took a great liking to Puyguilhem, gave him his newly raised regiment of dragoons, made him Maréchal-de-camp soon afterwards, and created expressly for him the office of Colonel-General of Dragoons.

The Duke Mazarin, who had retired from the Court in 1669, wished to dispose of his office of Grand Master of the Artillery; Puyguilhem was one of the first to get wind of this, and asked for the appointment; the King promised it to him, on condition that he said nothing about it for some days. When the day arrived on which the King had told him he would announce the appointment, Puyguilhem went to wait in a small room adjoining that in which the King was presiding over the Council of Finance; there he found Nyert, First Valet de Chambre, on duty, who asked what brought him. Puyguilhem, looking upon his affair as practically settled, thought he would ingratiate himself with this important official by telling him what the King had promised. Nyert congratulated him; then, taking out his watch, he said he saw he had just time to execute a commission which the King had given him and which he had forgotten; he immediately ran upstairs, four steps

at a time, to Louvois' office, and told him what he had just heard.

Louvois hated Puyguilhem as a friend of Colbert's, his rival; and he did not at all relish the prospect of seeing him in a position of authority which must necessarily bring him into constant communication with his own department of War; moreover, he knew Puyguilhem would not put up with the encroachments which he was always attempting on the privileges and authority of the Grand Master of Artillery. He thanked Nyert cordially, told him to go back at once, and, taking up some document to serve as a pretext, went down to the antechamber. Nyert, in apparent surprise at seeing him, told him that the Council was still sitting. "No matter," said Louvois, "I must see the King at once; I have something important to tell him," and he went in. The King at once rose and went to him, asking what brought him. Louvois drew him aside to a window, and then said he was informed that Puyguilhem was about to be declared Grand Master of Artillery, and, though His Majesty was indubitably free to dispense his favours as he thought fit, he thought it his duty to submit certain objections for his consideration. He then pointed out the complete incompatibility of temper between himself and Puyguilhem, who was fanciful and overbearing, and would certainly want to introduce great changes in the Artillery; he feared there would be perpetual misunderstandings and quarrels between the Grand Master and himself as Secretary of State; and, to say nothing of their pernicious effects on the public service, the consequence would be that His Majesty would be continually worried by appeals to settle their respective functions.

The King was extremely annoyed at finding that his secret was known to the very man from whom he wished to conceal it; he told Louvois gravely that nothing was settled as yet, and dismissed him. When the business of the Council was over, he saw Puyguilhem in the antechamber, and passed on without a word. Puyguilhem waited about all day; then, seeing that nothing happened, reminded the King of his promise at his *coucher*. The King replied that he could not fulfil it yet, but he would see about it. The dry tone in which he gave this ambiguous answer alarmed Puyguilhem, who went off at once to Madame de Montespan (for he was on the best of terms

with all the ladies), told her of his uneasiness, and begged her to put an end to it. She made all sorts of fine promises, and kept him in suspense for several days.

At last, weary of the delay and quite unable to guess the source of his trouble, he took a resolution which seems incredible, but which is nevertheless attested by every courtier of those days. During the course of all his *amours* the King always slept with the Queen; it was often late before he went to bed, but he never missed doing so; it was in the afternoon that he used to meet his mistress. Puyguilhem was on intimate terms with Madame de Montespan's favourite maid, for he disdained no means of acquiring information; he persuaded this woman to conceal him under the bed in the room where the King was to meet Madame de Montespan; and in this situation he overheard the whole of their conversation. From this he found out how Louvois had protested against his appointment, and how the King, angry at his secret having transpired, had determined not to give him the Artillery; he also found out that Madame de Montespan, who had promised to support him, was on the contrary doing him all the harm she could. The least movement, a cough, the merest accident, might have revealed his presence at any moment, and then what would have been his fate! There are stories at which one shudders while one relates them. Puyguilhem, however, was more lucky than he deserved, and was not discovered.

The King and his mistress parted at last, and Madame de Montespan went to her own room to dress for the rehearsal of a ballet, at which the whole Court was to be present. Puyguilhem, after attending to his own dress, went and stood by her door till she came out. Then he offered her his hand, and in a gentle, respectful voice asked whether he might flatter himself that she had remembered her promise to speak to the King on his behalf. She assured him that she had done so, making up a story of all she had said; Puyguilhem drew her on by asking questions now and then; at last, putting his mouth close to her ear, he told her that she was a lying cheat and a b——; and repeated to her word for word all that had passed on the subject between her and the King. Madame de Montespan was so terrified that she arrived in the room where the King and Court were already assembled trembling from head to foot, and immediately fainted away. The King ran to

her in great alarm, and with some difficulty she was restored to consciousness. That evening she told the King what had occurred ; he was furious at the insults which she had received from Puyguilhem, and very much puzzled to know how he had received such accurate information, and so promptly ; as for Madame de Montespan, she was convinced that the devil himself had told him.

Puyguilhem was also furious at losing the Artillery, so that his relations with the King were considerably strained. This could not last long ; after a day or two Puyguilhem, who had the privilege of the *grandes entrées*, seized an opportunity when he was alone with the King, and called on him audaciously to keep his word. The King replied that he had only given it on condition that Puyguilhem held his tongue, and as he had chosen to break his promise of secrecy he was no longer bound by his own. Thereupon Puyguilhem turned his back on the King, drew his sword, and broke it with his foot, exclaiming furiously that he would not longer serve a sovereign who broke his promises so shabbily. The King, though transported with anger, performed what was perhaps the finest action of his whole life ; he threw his stick out of the window, saying that he should be sorry to think he had struck a man of quality ; and immediately left the room. Next morning Puyguilhem was sent to the Bastille.

One of his most intimate friends was Guitry, a great favourite of the King's, who had created for him the office of Grand Master of the Wardrobe ; and he ventured to intercede for Puyguilhem and try to revive the King's old liking for him. At last the King took pity on Puyguilhem, who, he thought, had been driven mad by his disappointment, and wished to compensate him in some way. He gave the Artillery to the Count du Lude, who, in order to raise the purchase-money, sold his office of First Gentleman of the Chamber to the Duke de Gesvres ; and he, in his turn, resigned his post as Captain of the Bodyguard. The King sent to Puyguilhem in the Bastille, offering him this office to make up for the loss of the Artillery. Puyguilhem was so elated by this unexpected favour that he refused it, hoping for something better. The King renewed his offer, but it was not without a good deal of trouble that Guitry induced his friend in the Bastille to be so kind as to accept it. Having done so, he was released at once, thanked the

King, and took the oaths of his new office. He then sold the Dragoons.

I will not here repeat the story of his adventures with Mademoiselle, which she has herself told so naïvely in her Memoirs, nor will I dilate on his folly in delaying his marriage with her, after the King had given his consent; merely in order to put his servants into new liveries and to obtain permission for the ceremony to be performed at the King's Mass; thus giving Monsieur and M. le Prince time to persuade the King to withdraw his consent. Mademoiselle's anger knew no bounds; but Puyguilhem, who since his father's death had taken the title of Count de Lausun, gave in to the King's wishes with a good grace, showing greater wisdom than might have been expected of him.

He was in love with Madame de Monaco, the Count de Guiche's sister, who was Madame's intimate friend and superintendent of her household. Lausun was very jealous, and by no means satisfied with her conduct. One summer afternoon he went to St. Cloud, where he found Madame and her suite sitting on the grass in the shade, Madame de Monaco half reclining, with her hand on the ground, palm upwards. As he walked round the circle paying his compliments to the ladies, he contrived to time his steps so as to bring his heel into the hollow of Madame de Monaco's hand, twirled round, and then took his leave. Madame de Monaco had the fortitude not to scream, and made no complaint about it. He played her a much worse trick not long afterwards. He found out that the King had a passing intrigue with her, and that at a certain hour Bontems used to bring her, wrapped up in a cloak and hood, to a room where the King met her. Opposite this room was a privy; a little before the appointed hour Lausun concealed himself in it, fastened the door, and watched through the keyhole. Before long he saw the King come along, who entered the room, put the key in the keyhole outside, and then closed the door. Lausun slipped out, turned the key in the lock, and threw it down the privy, where he again concealed himself. Presently Bontems and the lady arrived, and were much surprised at not finding the key in the door. Bontems knocked gently at first, then louder; the King asked what was the matter; Bontems asked him to open the door, for the key was not there. The King

declared he had put it outside, and tried to open the door by the handle, while Bontems searched on the ground for the key. All three were much astonished and put out; at last the King and the lady had to say good-night to each other through the door; while Lausun, watching them through the keyhole opposite, was chuckling at their discomfiture.

In 1670 the King made a sort of triumphal march through Flanders, on the pretext of inspecting his frontier fortresses, escorted by an army corps and the whole of his household troops. The command of the troops and the general management of the expedition were entrusted to Lausun, who performed his duties very intelligently and with much magnificence. This singular mark of favour increased the ill-will of Louvois, whom Lausun took no trouble to conciliate, and in conjunction with Madame de Montespan, who had not forgiven Lausun's insults, he determined to ruin him. They contrived gradually to poison the King's mind against him; the episode of the broken sword was brought to remembrance; he was represented as a dangerous man, insatiable in his ambition; and attention was drawn to his continued friendship with the Countess de Soissons, who had been banished from the Court under suspicion of abominable crimes. They must, however, have brought some more specific accusation against Lausun, to judge from the barbarous manner in which he was afterwards treated; but I have not been able to ascertain what it was. This went on for nearly a year, during which Lausun had not the slightest suspicion that anything was wrong, for the King and Madame de Montespan both treated him with their usual familiarity and favour. But one day, in November 1671, Lausun was suddenly arrested on his return from Paris, whither he had gone to carry out some commission for Madame de Montespan, and sent first to the Bastille, and shortly afterwards to Pignerol, where he was imprisoned in a dungeon. His office of Captain of the Bodyguard was given to M. de Luxembourg, and he was also deprived of his governorship of Berry.

The effect on a person of Lausun's character of a fall, for which he could assign no reason, from such a height to a dungeon at Pignerol may be imagined. He bore it well for a time, however; but then he became so ill that he had to think of making his last confession. I have heard that

he suspected that a supposititious priest would be sent to him; for this reason he insisted on having a Capuchin, and as soon as he saw him he seized him by the beard and pulled it all directions, to make sure that it was not a false one. He remained in the dungeon four or five years. There were other prisoners in the adjacent cells, and also above him; and they contrived to make a hole through the wall by which they could talk to each other, and by degrees they enlarged it till a man could creep through. The Superintendent Fouquet had been a prisoner in the same part of the fortress since 1664; he heard from his neighbours that Lausun was there, and, as he was absolutely without news from the outside world, he was very anxious to see him; so a meeting between them was arranged. Fouquet stared with astonishment when Lausun, whom he had last seen as a cadet from Gascony, newly arrived at Court, and thankful to have a shelter under Marshal de Grammont's roof, told him that he had been Captain of the Guards, and Colonel-General of Dragoons, and that he had commanded an army with the commission of full General; but when Lausun proceeded to relate how he had been on the point of marrying Mademoiselle, with the King's consent, he thought he was listening to the ravings of a lunatic. They did not meet often after this, for Fouquet, thinking Lausun completely mad, put no faith in the news he related of the outside world; and indeed did not much like being left alone with him.

After a time the unfortunate Superintendent was allowed to see his wife and a few other people. One of the first things he talked about was the unhappy lot of poor Puyguilhem, whom he had last seen young and likely to make his way at Court, but who had gone completely off his head, and was shut up in this same prison, to conceal his infirmity. What was his astonishment when they assured him that all Lausun had told him was perfectly true! He could not get over it, and it was some time before he could be convinced that they had not gone mad too. About the same time Lausun was released from his dungeon, and given better quarters, with permission to see Fouquet whenever they liked. I do not know what Fouquet did to displease him, but when he left Pignerol he was his enemy, and ever afterwards did all in his power to injure him and his family.

Mademoiselle was in despair at Lausun's long imprison-

ment, and did all she could to obtain his release ; at last it occurred to the King that he might make her purchase her favourite's liberty for the benefit of the Duke du Maine. He proposed that she should settle on him the succession to the County of Eu, the Duchy of Aumale, and the principality of Dombes, properties of enormous value. She had already settled Eu and Aumale on Lausun, so without his consent she could do nothing, so far as these estates were concerned. She stood out against these conditions for a long time, though worried incessantly by alternate entreaties and menaces ; at last, knowing that the King disliked her and had never forgiven her for the part she played in the civil wars, and realising that he would never release Lausun except as a means of enriching his bastards, she gave her consent with bitter tears. But in order to make Lausun's renunciation of Mademoiselle's gifts valid, it was necessary that he should be at liberty when he signed it ; so he was brought to Bourbon, guarded by an escort of Musketeers, on the pretence that the waters were necessary to his health ; but in reality that he might confer with Madame de Montespan. He was, however, so indignant at the exorbitant conditions imposed upon him that he refused flatly to accept them, and was taken back to Pignerol.

This firmness on his part by no means suited the King's views for his beloved bastard ; he sent Lausun's sister, Madame de Nogent, to Pignerol, with a message made up of threats and promises. After a good deal of trouble she prevailed on her brother to accept the conditions ; in the autumn of 1680 he was again taken to Bourbon, where he signed the required documents, and was at once released, though restricted to the provinces of Anjou and Touraine. After four years, the clamours of Mademoiselle, who accused the King and Madame de Montespan of a breach of faith, prevailed so far that Lausun was allowed to return to Paris, though still not allowed to come within two leagues of the place where the King happened to be. He spent a good deal of time, however, with Monsieur at the Palais-Royal and St. Cloud, and amused himself with play, at which he won large sums of money.

After a time his situation, so near the Court which he was not allowed to visit, became intolerable ; and he obtained the King's permission to go to England, where James II gave him a distinguished reception. The Revolution, which

was already brewing, broke out when Lausun had been in England about eight months; and it really seemed as though it had been planned for the express purpose of restoring his fortunes. James II, betrayed by his favourites and his Ministers, and not knowing whom to trust, confided to Lausun's care the Queen and the infant Prince of Wales, and he succeeded in escorting them safely to Calais. Directly she arrived there the Queen despatched a courier to Versailles; and at the close of her letter to the King she hinted that it was painful to her to be unable to bring into his presence the man to whom she owed her safety and that of her son. The King's reply was that he himself was under equal obligations to Lausun, and would show his gratitude by restoring him to favour.

Accordingly, when Lausun was presented by the Queen of England, the King received him kindly, restored to him the privilege of the *grandes entrées*, and gave him rooms in the *château* of Versailles. Like a clever courtier he made the most of his favourable situation at the two Courts. The King allowed him to accept the Garter from James II; appointed him to command the French auxiliaries in the expedition to Ireland; and, when he returned to France with that monarch after the disastrous battle of the Boyne, conferred the rank of Duke upon him at the special request of James II. What a miraculous change of fortune for Lausun! yet what was his position compared with what it would have been if he had married Mademoiselle, and had control of her prodigious wealth, with the Montpensier dukedom and peerage! Starting from such an elevation, who can say how high he might have soared, especially if there had been children of the marriage?

I have spoken elsewhere of his whims, his malicious tricks, and his eccentricities. For the remainder of his long life he continued to enjoy his familiar access to the King and the greatest distinction at Court; he lived the life of a great nobleman, entertaining the best company with great magnificence, as he continued to do at Paris after the King's death. Yet he was never content; he was conscious that his familiarity with the King was only outward show; he was well aware that the monarch was always on his guard with him, nor could all his arts and indefatigable attentions ever overcome this secret repugnance. It was for this reason that he married my sister-in-law; he hoped

that his relationship to Marshal de Lorge, then commanding the army in Germany, might lead the King to consult him seriously ; finding that he was mistaken, his disappointment led him to quarrel violently and publicly with the Marshal. He arranged the Duke de Lorge's marriage with Chamillart's daughter from the same motive ; he hoped great things from the Minister's influence, and again he was deceived. These and other disappointments of the same kind threw him into a profound melancholy ; he fancied he was in deep disgrace, and told everybody so. Every year he celebrated the anniversary of his imprisonment by committing some eccentricity ; he used to say that he was not quite sane on that day, and not responsible for his actions. He thought the King would be flattered by this delicate way of paying court to him, and never realised that he was only laughed at for his pains.

Though naturally eccentric in everything, he liked to affect a greater degree of eccentricity than he really had, and kept up this affectation even before his servants. He used to pretend to be deaf and blind, so that people might be less careful what they said or did in his presence ; and he delighted in making game of silly persons, even those in high places, by talking to them in a language which had absolutely no sense. His manners were always gentle, coaxing, even deferential ; but in his low, honied tones he would utter the most biting sarcasms ; only a few words, and those were spoken with an air of absent-minded simplicity, as if he were unconscious of what he were saying. Consequently everybody, without exception, was afraid of him ; he had many acquaintances, but hardly a friend in the world ; and yet in some ways he deserved to have friends, for he would do anything to help people if it lay in his power, and his purse was always open.

I have mentioned how we had made up a marriage between Mademoiselle de Malause, a cousin of Madame de Saint-Simon's, and the Count de Poitiers ; the wedding party was held at Lausun's house. A year later the Count de Poitiers died : a very sad thing, for he was a most promising young man, very rich, and the last of his illustrious family ; this was just about the time of the King's death. During the following summer the Duke of Orleans held a review of the household troops in the plain adjacent to the Bois de Boulogne ; Lausun had a pretty house at

Passy, close to where the review was to be held; Madame de Lausun was there with a large party, which I joined on the eve of the review. Madame de Poitiers, who was living with her at that time, wished very much to see the review, for she was very young and had hardly seen anything; but she did not like to be seen in public in her widow's mourning. Madame de Lausun, however, thought she could take her in her coach provided that she sat well back, so as not to be seen; and it was so arranged. While the party were enjoying themselves merrily, M. de Lausun, who had gone to Paris that morning, suddenly returned; and with some hesitation he was told of the plans for next day. He had no sooner heard them than he burst into a furious passion, and put a stop to them at once, using the most violent and insulting language to his wife. She began to weep quietly; Madame de Poitiers sobbed aloud; and the rest of the party did not know which way to look. The evening seemed interminable, and a meal in the most melancholy refectory would have been a merry feast compared with our supper; Lausun sat in moody silence, and hardly any one spoke a word. In accordance with his usual habit, he left the table when dessert was brought in, and went to bed. Then people began to talk a little, but Madame de Lausun politely put a stop to any comments on what had occurred, and had card-tables set out, to prevent any further discussion.

Early next morning I went to Lausun's room, intending to speak my mind to him pretty freely about the scene of the previous evening. I had no time to say a word. The moment he saw me he stretched out his arms, exclaiming that he did not deserve the honour of my visit; he was a lunatic who ought to be put under restraint; he was not worthy of such a wife as he had, and he ought to kiss her footsteps; then, with tears in his eyes, he said he was to be pitied rather than blamed; he was eighty years of age, with neither children nor descendants: he had been Captain of the Guard, and, though if he were so still he was incapable of performing the duties of his office, the thought that he had been deprived of it was like a dagger in his heart, and he could never get over it; anything which brought back his recollections drove him mad, and when he heard his wife talk of taking Madame de Poitiers to this review of the household troops, in which he no longer had any share,

he had quite lost his head and behaved like a madman. He said he could not face anybody after such a scene; he would shut himself up in his room; the only favour he asked was that I would see his wife and implore her to forgive a poor crazy old man, who was dying of grief and shame. After this sincere and painful confession I could say nothing, except to comfort him a little. The reconciliation with his wife was easily effected; but we had a good deal of trouble to get him out of his room, and for some days he seemed to dislike meeting anybody—so I was told at least, for I had to leave that evening, having little leisure at that time from my public occupations.

As I have said, his sarcasms spared nobody. Ministers, generals, and prosperous people, with their families, were his favourite victims; he had, as it were, usurped the right to say and do what he pleased, and nobody ventured to resent it. But the Grammont family were an exception; he never forgot the kindness and hospitality he had received at their house at the outset of his career, and he always held them in respect. The old Count de Grammont abused this impunity, and avenged the sufferings of the Court by continually saying sarcastic things about Lausun; but Lausun never replied to them, and never showed signs of irritation; all he did was to keep quietly out of the Count's way.

He was always extremely kind to his sister's children. His nephew the Bishop of Marseilles distinguished himself greatly during the ravages of the plague in that part of the country, exposing himself freely and spending a great deal of money to relieve the sufferers. When the plague had ceased, Lausun asked the Duke of Orleans to give the Bishop an abbey. Shortly afterwards there was a distribution of church benefices, but the Bishop of Marseilles was overlooked. Lausun, as though ignorant of the fact, went to the Regent and asked him whether he had been so kind as to remember his nephew. The Duke of Orleans was embarrassed, and there was an awkward pause. As if to relieve the situation, Lausun said in his meek, respectful voice, "He will try to do better another time, Sir," and went off smiling. The Duke of Orleans felt the sarcasm; he repaired his omission by offering the Bishop of Marseilles the see of Laon, and on his refusal to quit his own diocese gave him a rich abbey.

Three or four years before his death Lausun had a serious

illness which nearly carried him off. One day, when the doctors thought very badly of his case, Biron and his wife ventured to slip into his room on tiptoe, keeping behind the curtains, where they thought themselves out of sight; but he did see them reflected in the looking-glass. The sick man liked Biron well enough, but he could not bear his wife, though his own niece; he thought her greedy of money, and her manners were insufferable to him, as indeed they were to everybody else. He was annoyed at this surreptitious visit; he saw that, impatient for her expected inheritance, she had come to see for herself how long he was likely to live; and he determined to amuse himself at her expense. He began praying aloud, as if he thought himself alone; asked forgiveness for his past life, and went on to thank God that there was still one way open to him to make some sort of reparation for his sins; he would leave all his wealth to the hospitals without reserve. He uttered this prayer and resolution in a voice so full of pious conviction that Biron and his wife never doubted for a moment that he was in earnest, and slunk away convinced that their chance of a legacy was gone. They went to Madame de Lausun in a desperate state of mind, begging her to do what she could to induce her husband to modify his determination. In the meantime, the sick man sent for his lawyer, and Madame de Biron was almost distracted when she heard of it; which was precisely what he intended. He dictated a will, which would have been fatal to all her hopes; but put off signing it; and, as he grew better, he never signed it at all. This little comedy amused him immensely; he could not refrain from laughing over it afterwards with some of his acquaintances. In spite of his advanced age he recovered his health completely; for though he looked delicate he had an iron constitution.

He dined and supped heartily every day; in fact, he was a great eater, without any discrimination; and he used to drink iced beer, cider, and lemonade freely. I remember once that, after this illness, he once ate such a quantity of fish, vegetables, and other things at my house that in the evening we sent to find out quietly whether he had not been taken ill in consequence; our messenger reported that he was at table when he arrived at his house, and eating with a good appetite. His habits of gallantry lasted till quite late in life. Mademoiselle was very jealous in conse-

quence, and there were frequent quarrels between them. I have heard from Madame de Fontenille, an amiable and clever woman, and very truthful, that M. de Lausun once went to pass some time with Mademoiselle at Eu, and could not refrain from running after women ; it came to the ears of Mademoiselle, who flew into a passion, scratched his face, and banished him from her presence. A reconciliation was effected by the Countess de Fiesque ; Mademoiselle appeared at one end of a long gallery, Lausun, who was at the other end, travelled the whole length of the gallery on his knees, till he found himself at her feet. Similar scenes recurred frequently ; at last Lausun got tired of being beaten, and gave Mademoiselle a good beating in her turn. This happened more than once ; in the end they quarrelled once for all, and never saw each other again. Lausun had several portraits of her, and always spoke of her with the greatest respect; no one doubted that they were secretly married.

His temper was naturally morose and unsociable, and during his long imprisonment solitary brooding had become a habit with him. Even when he had the most brilliant company in his house he would retire to his room after dinner and spend the afternoon alone, leaving Madame de Lausun to entertain his guests. As a rule, he did not even take a book with him on these occasions, for he seldom read anything, and then only trifling stuff. The consequence was that he knew nothing except what he had learnt from his own observation ; and to the last his mind was occupied with court gossip and the news of the day. I have often lamented his incapacity to write an account of all he had seen and done ; it would have been a treasure-house of information and curious stories ; but he had not the necessary perseverance. I used to try to get him to talk of his experiences, in hopes of extracting some scraps worth recording, but it was always a failure. He would begin to tell a story, but he had not gone far before the name of some person connected with it would put him off the track to tell one all about him ; this led to the mention of a second person, then of a third, till there were a dozen stories going at once, just as we find in novels ; and none of them was ever finished, so that it was impossible to get anything out of him of any value. Besides, his conversation was always restrained by his morose temper and habitual caution ; it

was amusing only on account of the flashes of wit and malicious sarcasms which often fell from him.

A few months before his last illness, when he was over ninety, he still amused himself by breaking in horses; one day when the King was going through the Bois de Boulogne on his way to La Muette, Lausun was riding a half-broken colt which he had trained himself, and he made it perform all sorts of riding-school tricks for his amusement. The spectators were astonished at his skill, and his firm, graceful seat in the saddle.

His last illness came on very suddenly; it was the most horrible of all diseases, cancer in the mouth. He bore it to the end with the utmost patience and fortitude. When it was a little advanced, he retired to a small set of rooms, which he had rented for this express purpose, in the monastery of the Petits-Augustins, adjoining his own house; and there awaited the end. He devoted all the rest of his time to preparing himself for death, and listened attentively to the pious exhortations of his confessor. When we went to see him, we found nothing unpleasant in the sick-room; he showed no sign of suffering; he spoke little, and seemed indifferent to what was going on in the world; but he was quiet and polite. His tranquil courage sustained him for four months, but during the last week or two he saw nobody except his wife for short intervals. He received all the sacraments very piously, and retained his senses to the last.

He sent for Biron early on his last day, and told him that he had left him all his fortune except a moderate legacy to Castelmoron, the son of his other sister, and various bequests to servants; he impressed upon him that he did so only at the urgent request of Madame de Lausun, and enjoined him strictly to dispute nothing with her, and on no account to go to law with her about anything whatever. Biron told me this himself next morning. A month earlier Lausun had sent for General Dillon, who managed King James's business in France, and returned to him his collar of the Garter, together with an onyx George, surrounded with very valuable diamonds, to be sent to that Prince.

CHAPTER XXX

1723

Sudden death of the Duke of Orleans from apoplexy—His last moments —M. le Duc appointed Prime Minister—I attend the King's *lever*—I pay a visit of condolence to the Duchess of Orleans and to the Duke of Chartres—I have an interview with M. le Duc—Sad reflections—The King's grief—The Duke of Orleans' funeral—The Count de Toulouse announces his secret marriage

I PERCEIVE that I have been unduly prolix on the subject of Lausun; but I had exceptionally good opportunities for knowing him, and I thought so remarkable a character deserved notice; the more so because, as he played no great part in public affairs, his name will probably not figure prominently in the histories of the period. Apart from this, another motive has impelled me to catch at any excuse for lingering in my narrative; I am drawing near to a final event which I dread reaching because my desires regarding it are not reconcileable with the facts. My desires are heartfelt, and they torture me; for the truth is terrible, and any attempt to disguise it is in vain. I need hardly say that I allude to the death of the Duke of Orleans and its attendant circumstances. It will be readily understood what a painful task it is for me to relate it after our long and close friendship—a friendship which on my part will last as long as my life, and which fills me with grief and terror on his account. We have seen that he dreaded a lingering death—though to one who knows how to profit by it a long illness is a very precious favour—and that he expressed a wish to die suddenly. Alas! his desire was granted; I shudder to think that God may have granted it in His wrath.

I went to see him on the 21st of December, and spent three quarters of an hour alone with him; I noticed nothing unusual about him; he was rather dull and heavy, as he had been for some time, but his mind was quite clear, and

he talked in his ordinary manner. I left him and returned to Meudon, but I had hardly been there an hour before I heard a commotion, and Madame de Saint-Simon came in, accompanied by a groom who had been sent from Versailles by the Marquis de Ruffec, to tell me that the Duke of Orleans had been struck down by apoplexy. I was much shocked, but not surprised, for, as we have seen, I had been anticipating something of the sort. I sent for my carriage; there was some delay in bringing it owing to the distance of the stables from the house, and when at last I reached the park gate another messenger met me with the news that all was over. I remained there for more than half an hour, absorbed in grief and painful reflections; at last I made up my mind to go on to Versailles, where I shut myself up in my own rooms.

It seems that after I left the Duke of Orleans he had a brief interview with Nangis, after which Madame Falari was admitted. She was a very pretty adventuress, who had married another adventurer, brother to the Duchess de Béthune; she was one of the unfortunate Prince's mistresses. He sat for nearly an hour chatting with her, till it should be time for him to go to the King at his usual hour for business. They were sitting in two arm-chairs, close to each other, when he suddenly fell over sideways; and from that moment he never showed the faintest gleam of consciousness. The Falari screamed for help, but no one answered; at last she propped up the poor Prince's body as well as she could against the arm-chairs, and rushed out into the antechamber. There was nobody about, for the attendants knew that it was the Duke of Orleans' hour for transacting business with the King and that he would not want them; and he always went up to the King's rooms by the little staircase leading directly from his dressing-room. At last Madame Falari found somebody and sent for medical assistance; but a good half-hour elapsed before either doctor or surgeon was in attendance. When they did arrive they saw that the case was hopeless; the patient was bled, but gave not the slightest sign of life; and in less than two hours all was over.

As soon as the Bishop of Fréjus heard the news he settled with the King that M. le Duc should succeed the Duke of Orleans as Prime Minister; no doubt he had prepared his mind in advance for this change, especially after what I

had told him about the Duke of Orleans' health. M. le Duc arrived shortly afterwards, when the most distinguished of the persons assembled in the antechamber were admitted to the King's room ; it was remarked that the King seemed deeply grieved, and that his eyes were full of tears. Fréjus, addressing him, said that, having had the great misfortune to lose the Duke of Orleans, in praise of whom he said a very few words, His Majesty could not do better than ask M. le Duc to be so kind as to undertake the responsibility of public affairs, and to accept the office of Prime Minister. The King, without saying a word, looked at Fréjus and signified his consent; and M. le Duc at once offered his thanks. Shortly afterwards M. le Duc left the room, followed by those who had been called in; his train was augmented by a crowd of people waiting outside; and in an instant his name was on everybody's lips.

The Duke de Chartres, at that time a debauched young cub, was at Paris with an opera-girl when he heard of his father's illness ; and on his way to Versailles he met a courier who announced his death. There was no crowd round his carriage when he alighted ; only the Duke de Noailles and de Guiche, who at once offered their services in anything which lay in their power. He treated them like a pair of importunate busybodies, and got away from them as quickly as he could. When he arrived at his mother's rooms he announced that he had met two men who wanted to set a trap for him, but he had not fallen into it, and had promptly got rid of them. This singular manifestation of acuteness and worldly wisdom was a sample of the intelligence which this Prince has continued to display ever since. With some difficulty he was made to understand that he had been guilty of a remarkably stupid blunder ; but all the same he went on committing similar ones.

As for myself, after a night of cruel reflections, I went to the King's *lever* ; not to show myself, but in order to have a convenient opportunity for saying a word to M. le Duc ; for, though I was much displeased with him for allowing his consent to be extorted for the re-establishment of the bastards, we had remained on friendly terms ever since the *lit-de-justice* at the Tuileries. As he was very tall, it was easy to distinguish him in the prodigious throng which surrounded the *lever* ; I caught his eye and made a sign that I wished to speak to him, and he made his way through

the crowd and came to me at once. I drew him aside, and said I would not conceal that the death of the Duke of Orleans was a great loss to me, but I hoped he would believe that if the choice of a successor had been left to me I should not have thought of any one but himself; to which he made a very kind reply. I went on to say that among the papers which the Duke of Orleans had been about to lay before the King at the time of his seizure was one which I was anxious to consult him about; and begged him to send for me directly he had a few minutes to spare, and to have me admitted to his rooms by a side-entrance, so that I might not have to pass through the crowd in his antechambers. He promised most graciously to see me some time during the day, apologising for not naming an hour then and there, because, in the embarrassment of his new situation, he could not tell when he would be free. I knew the arrangement of his rooms well, because they were the same which the Duchess of Berry had occupied after her marriage; and my own were close by, in the same gallery of the new wing.

Then I went to see the Duchess Sforza, and told her that I thought it right to show my respect and attachment to the Duke of Orleans by paying visits of condolence to the members of his family, and it would be most improper to omit one to the Duchess of Orleans; but she knew how matters stood between the Duchess and myself, that for a long time we had not been on speaking terms I had no wish, I said, to alter the situation, but simply to do the proper thing, and therefore I should be much obliged if she would ask the Duchess whether she was willing to receive me. She said she felt sure the Duchess would be glad to see me, and went on her errand at once, while I waited in her room. She soon returned with a message to say that the Duchess of Orleans would be glad to receive me, and I went directly to pay my visit. I found the Duchess in bed; only a few of her ladies and the Duke of Chartres were in the room. As soon as I drew near she began talking of our common loss, but said nothing about our personal relations; I had begged the Duchess Sforza that it might be so. The Duke of Chartres soon left the room, and I brought the conversation to an end as quickly as possible.

After this I went to call on the Duke of Chartres, who had the rooms occupied by his father before he became

Regent. I was told he was engaged. I went back three times; at the third attempt his First Valet-de-Chambre was ashamed to give me the same answer, and in spite of my remonstrances sent in to tell him I was there. He immediately appeared at the door of his private room, where he had been sitting with some very common people; I forget who they were, but they were the sort of companions he preferred. He did not seem at all grieved, but stiff and embarrassed. I made my speech of condolence clearly and distinctly; apparently he put me in the same category as the Dukes de Noailles and de Guiche, for he did not vouchsafe a single word in reply. I waited a moment or two; then, seeing that nothing proceeded from this wooden image, I retired. He did not move a step to reconduct me, as he ought to have done, to the outer door of his apartments, but bolted back into his private room; as I withdrew I cast my eyes to the right and left, and I must say the people there seemed considerably astonished. I went back to my own rooms, very tired with running about the *château*.

I had just finished dinner when M. le Duc sent to say that he was ready for me. He received me at his side-door, placed an arm-chair for me, and took one himself. When we had discussed the business I had come about he told me that he too had been to see the Duke of Chartres, and after expressing his formal condolence had told him that he hoped they would be friends, for out of respect for the memory of the Duke of Orleans he would always be ready to render him any service in his power. To this the Duke of Chartres replied not a single word. M. le Duc having added a little more to the same effect, he managed to utter a monosyllabic "Thank you"; but with such manifest anxiety to get rid of his visitor that M. le Duc beat a hasty retreat. I related my experiences with the same Prince, and we condoled with each other. M. le Duc was very friendly and polite; he said he hoped I would often come and see him; to which I replied that, knowing how overwhelmed with business he would be, I would not trespass on his time unless I had something really important to say. I would only ask, as a favour, that when I did come he would give orders that I should be admitted at once, for I was not accustomed to waiting about in antechambers; and I would try to be neither lengthy nor importunate. Then, with

many compliments and assurances of friendship on his part, I took my leave, and fled to Meudon.

Madame de Saint-Simon went to Versailles next day, to pay her respects to the King, and call on the Duchess of Orleans and her son. As soon as the Bishop of Fréjus knew she was there he went to see her, and talked a good deal about me; he said many kind and complimentary things, but, in spite of it all, she thought she perceived a wish on his part to get rid of me from Versailles. La Vrillière, who also came to see her, expressed the same wish, but, as he had not Fréjus' tact and urbanity, he put it more plainly. Madame de Saint-Simon was shocked at his ingratitude after the important services I had rendered him. The fact is, the little wretch had been teasing the Duke of Orleans to confer a dukedom on him, and, although I had been very guarded in my answers when he spoke to me on the subject, he suspected that I had not been favourable to his pretensions; he thought, however, that he had got round M. le Duc, and that if I were out of the way he would obtain what he wanted.

It did not require hints of this sort to confirm me in the determination which I had taken as soon as I noticed the failing health of the Duke of Orleans. I retired to Paris, making up my mind to show myself before the new masters of the kingdom only on such occasions as good breeding required, or in cases of urgent necessity. Fortunately for me, I had never lost sight of the probability of a complete change in my position; and, to say the truth, the loss of the Duke of Burgundy and my subsequent experience of the manner in which the government was carried on, had made me quite indifferent on the subject. I had seen that beloved Prince snatched away at the same age as my father had reached when he lost Louis XIII; that is to say, my father was thirty-seven when that King died at the age of forty-one, while I was thirty-six when I lost a Prince still under thirty, just as he was about to ascend the throne and restore truth, order, and justice to his kingdom. Now I had lost the Duke of Orleans, my personal friend, only six months older than myself, who to all appearance might have lived to the age of a hundred. I had long foreseen that I might probably survive my own utility, and I had endeavoured to prepare myself for the change.

The death of the Duke of Orleans made a great sensation

both at home and abroad, but his memory received more justice, beyond all comparison, from foreigners than from his own countrymen. Foreign Ministers, it is true, knew his weakness, and the English traded on it to their own advantage; none the less they appreciated his genius, his statesmanlike breadth of view, and the sagacity and promptness of his intellect; they recognised his superiority, not only to his own Ministers, but to the envoys sent to negotiate with him. These qualities secured their respect, to which his well-earned reputation for personal bravery also contributed; at the same time his pleasant and gracious manner, which made even a refusal seem charming, rendered him popular. The brief interval during which the enchantments of the wretched Dubois had practically reduced him to a nonentity only raised this Prince in the eyes of foreigners; for they contrasted the policy of his government while it was really his own with that pursued by his Minister; and when that Minister died they saw him with admiration resume the helm and display the same qualities as before. The weakness of character, which was his great defect, was not realised abroad to nearly the same extent as in France.

The King, whose heart had been won by the invariable respect shown him by the Duke of Orleans and by his constant efforts to please him, wept when he heard of his death, and regretted him sincerely; whenever he has mentioned his name since, and it has often happened, it has always been with affectionate esteem. Thus the truth prevailed, in spite of lies and the most artful, atrocious calumnies, concerning which I shall have something to say in the additions which I propose to make to these Memoirs, if God grants me time to do it.

The demeanour of M. le Duc, who profited so greatly by the death of the Duke of Orleans, was gentlemanlike and becoming. Madame la Duchesse repressed her real feelings very decently; the bastards, who were no gainers by the change, could not rejoice. Fréjus had the greatest difficulty in constraining himself; his hopes for the future were too much for his self-control; in spite of all his efforts, his face beamed with joy.

In the Court there was little difference of opinion; it was generally agreed that the death of the Duke of Orleans was a deliverance. Some, indeed, there were who, regarding him from the same point of view as foreigners, delighted

in his agreeable wit and charming manners; who were pleased by his accessibility, the gentle and inexhaustible patience with which he listened to petitioners, the appearance of good-nature which (though sometimes assumed) sat so easily on him, and by his clever, funny ways of refusing requests and getting rid of bores without even hurting their feelings; such as these felt genuine regret for his loss. There were others, in greater numbers, who regretted it too; not so much because they had any liking for him, as because they distrusted his successor, and, still more, the people who surrounded him. But by the bulk of the Court the Duke of Orleans was not regretted in the least; some had always belonged to hostile cabals; others were disgusted by his licentious life and by his habit of making promises which he never intended to keep; some were dissatisfied with his treatment of them, though in most cases without the slightest reason; there were also the ungrateful, who always form the majority in any Court, and the usual crowd of stupid people ready to applaud anything new.

In the Church neither Jansenists nor Constitutionists had any particular reason to grieve over his loss. The hopes of the former had been raised high for a brief period at the beginning of his Regency; and their disappointment had been all the greater when they found themselves worse treated than under the late King. The Constitutionists, on the other hand, were furious because he would not let them have everything their own way; their ambition was to sweep away, once for all, the maxims and the liberties of the Gallican Church, to abolish the right of appealing to Councils, and to establish the episcopal authority on such a footing that it should be formidable to Kings themselves. The Duke of Orleans, while willing to sacrifice private individuals to their tender mercies, kept a tight hand over them so far as their main object was concerned; they were, therefore, glad enough to be rid of him; and hoped for better things under his successor, who would probably not be so quick to perceive their designs.

The Parliament of Paris, and the other Parliaments throughout the kingdom in sympathy with it, had never forgiven the stern measures by which the Duke of Orleans had compelled it to respect his authority. True, it had contrived, by mingled cunning and audacity, to elude those measures to a great extent, but it had been foiled in its

principal object, which was to transform itself from a mere court of justice into a body resembling the English Parliament, but with an upper Chamber kept in strict subjection. It was therefore with unconcealed joy that the Parliament saw itself delivered from the authority of the Duke of Orleans.

He was not regretted by the Army. The officers were offended at his indiscriminate lavishness in granting the cross of St. Louis and commissions of all grades, which were too often to be obtained through the influence of women, or by bribing officials. The pay of the soldiers had been raised, but the price of the commonest necessaries had risen so enormously that they were no better off and not in the least grateful. As for the Navy, it had been completely neglected and had fallen into utter decay; any prospect of a change of administration was welcome to that service ;—it could not be for the worse.

The people in general, both in Paris and in the provinces, groaning under high prices and a cruel burden of taxation, were not disposed to regret the death of the man whom they regarded as the author of their misfortunes. I had foreseen that any measures to extricate the finances from the chaotic and ruinous condition into which they had fallen under Louis XIV would be unpopular, and it was mainly to shield the Duke of Orleans from responsibility that I advised the assembly of the States-General immediately after the King's death. As we have seen, he consented to this, but was afterwards dissuaded by the Duke de Noailles, who had his own personal interests to serve. The consequence was that the Duke of Orleans was held to blame for the unfortunate state of the kingdom, and the general insecurity of property. The lapse of years has, however, opened many eyes to the true facts ; his administration is now looked back to with regret ; and the public has at last rendered to his memory the justice which had always been his due.

The body of the Duke of Orleans was transported from Versailles to St. Cloud ; and next day his heart was interred at Val de Grâce. The coffin was taken to St. Denis, the procession traversing Paris with great pomp ; the obsequies were, however, not celebrated till the 12th of February. The Duke of Chartres, now Duke of Orleans, the Count de Clermont, and the Prince of Conti were chief mourners ;

the Archbishop of Rouen officiated ; and the funeral sermon was preached by the Bishop of Angers, who failed to do justice to his subject. The King visited the Duchess of Orleans and Madame la Duchesse, and he paid the same honour to the Duke of Chartres, but to no other Prince of the Blood ; he also went to see the Princess of Conti, Mademoiselle de Chartres, and Madame du Maine.

On the day following the death of the Duke of Orleans the Count de Toulouse announced his marriage with Madame de Gondrin, sister to the Duke de Noailles. The silly, jealous fools who abound in society grumbled a good deal on seeing her assume the rank of her new condition. As we have seen, I have no reason to like the Duke de Noailles, and I have spoken my mind freely concerning him ; but truth compels me to say that, considering the illustrious blood of the Noailles, there would have been no reason to object if a legitimate Prince of the Blood had married a daughter of that house. People are misled by the fact that the father of the first Marshal de Noailles accepted the base employment of Captain of Cardinal Mazarin's Body-guard. The truth is, however, that long before the year 1250 we find the Noailles intermarrying with the best families of their province ; and the estate and *château* of Noailles have been in their possession from time immemorial.

CONCLUSION

My love of truth—Considerations of impartiality—The trustworthiness of these Memoirs—I prophesy that if and when these Memoirs see the light they will by many be denounced—For whom they were written—My conversations recorded with scrupulous fidelity—My faulty literary style, for which I pray the reader's indulgence.

I HAVE at last reached the period which I always assigned for the termination of these Memoirs. There can be no good Memoirs but such as are absolutely true; and none can be true but such as are written by trustworthy persons who have themselves taken part in the scenes which they describe; more than that, the writer must have so great a love of truth that he is ready to sacrifice everything else to it. As to this point, I venture to bear witness on my own behalf, and I am convinced that no one who knew me would hesitate to corroborate me. It is indeed this love of truth which has been the chief obstacle to my own advancement; I have often been conscious of this, but I never could bring myself to disguise facts, even when they tell against myself.

My readers will have no difficulty in finding cases in which I have been grossly taken in, led away by personal friendship, or by my zeal for the welfare of the State, which I have always preferred to any other consideration whatever. I could have related many others; if I refrained it was because they concerned myself alone, and threw no light on matters of public interest. It will not be forgotten how perseveringly I urged the Duke of Orleans to entrust the finances to the Duke de Noailles because I thought, very erroneously, that he was the most capable man for the office; although at that time I was full of resentment against him on account of the treacherous and rascally trick which he had just played me. Again, I did all in my power to save the Duke du Maine, regardless of my most cherished personal interests and prejudices, because I considered it dangerous to combine an attack on him with that on the Parliament

which could not be postponed. I content myself with citing these two instances; but others will be found scattered about in these Memoirs.

It remains to be considered whether I have been impartial. Impartiality is a very desirable quality, but it is difficult of attainment; I will go so far as to say that it is impossible for a man writing about events which he has witnessed and in which he has himself played an active part. Honest, upright people please us; on the other hand, we are moved to anger against the rogues who swarm about a Court, more especially if they have injured us; for Stoicism is merely an impossible though noble dream. I do not pride myself, therefore, on my impartiality; any such claim would be too easily refuted. It will be clear enough to any reader of these Memoirs that praise and blame come from my heart when I speak of those I love or dislike; that both are milder with regard to indifferent persons; nevertheless, that praise and blame are alike tempered to good or bad according to their degree of merit or vice. Moreover, I must do myself the justice of saying, what I think will be borne out by a study of these Memoirs, that I have been constantly on my guard against my predilections or aversions, especially the latter, distrusting myself as I would distrust an enemy; that I have striven to hold the scales evenly, to avoid all extravagance and exaggeration, and above all to bring the truth to light as clearly as lay in my power. Within such limitations I may claim to be impartial, and I do not believe that any higher degree of impartiality is really possible.

As regards the trustworthiness of my Memoirs, it will be seen that most of the events related in them came under my own observation, and that, when they did not, my information was derived from persons who themselves took part in them; I name these persons, and their names are beyond suspicion, as is the fact of my close personal intimacy with them. When my information comes from less trustworthy sources I note the fact; and when I was in the dark concerning any particular event I am not ashamed to confess my ignorance. These Memoirs are, therefore, original and derived from the fountain-head; no doubt can be cast on their accuracy or authenticity; I think I may add that up to the present no Memoirs have been published comprising a larger variety of subjects, or treating them with more

research or in greater detail ; none presenting a more curious and instructive mass of information.

It matters little to me, for I shall not be here to see it, but if these Memoirs ever see the light I have no doubt there will be a prodigious outcry against them. Every man is interested in his own family, his own pretensions, his own chimeras ; and nothing which casts a doubt on such claims can be tolerated for a moment. The truth is acceptable only when it favours them, and in such matters it is rarely favourable. If a writer speaks well of any one he need expect no thanks—as a truthful person, he could not do otherwise ; on the other hand, those of whose pretensions one cannot speak so favourably, and they are much more numerous, are furious. As during the period of which I have written, especially towards its close, everything was falling into confusion and chaos, and these Memoirs breathe nothing but order and the observance of proper rules, they are sure to be almost universally denounced. But they are not meant for those self-interested pretenders who are the plague of the State, who are indeed doing their best to bring it to the ground ; they are for those who seek information about the past in order to obtain guidance for the future, who care for no interests but those of truth, justice, order, and well-regulated policy.

I have a remark to make about my conversations with the Duke of Burgundy, the Duke of Orleans, and M. de Beauvilliers ; with the late King on three or four occasions, with M. du Maine once, with M. le Duc, and many other persons of distinction. Many of them are of such a nature that readers who did not know me personally may be tempted to class them with those fictitious speeches which historians are in the habit of putting into the mouths of generals, ambassadors, senators, or conspirators, merely to adorn their books. But I declare, with the same love of truth which has always guided my pen, that every one of these conversations has been recorded with scrupulous fidelity ; and that, if I have anything to reproach myself with, it is that I have rather weakened than fortified my own speeches on those occasions ; the reason being that, in the excitement of the moment, one speaks with a force and animation which cannot be reproduced in writing. I will add, with the utmost confidence, that no one who knew me familiarly would for a moment suspect the fidelity of my reports of these

conversations; there is not one who would recognise me in every word of my own speeches.

Finally, shall I say anything of my literary style? of its negligence, of its tautology, of the obscurity resulting from sentences unduly spun out, of the repetitions of which I may possibly have been guilty? I am conscious of these defects, but I have been unable to avoid them; I have always been carried away by my subject, and too careless of the manner in which I expressed myself, so long as I could make my meaning clear. I have never professed to be qualified for the Academy, and I cannot break myself of the habit of writing rapidly. To correct my style and render it more agreeable, I should have to recast my whole work; the task is beyond me, and it would probably be undertaken in vain. A man cannot correct the mistakes in his writings unless he first knows how to write well; and it will be only too readily perceived that I cannot pride myself on that accomplishment. I have aimed at nothing beyond truth and accuracy; and these will be found consistently throughout my Memoirs, of which they are indeed the very life and soul. For their sake I venture to hope that my faulty style may be thought to deserve some kindly indulgence.

INDEX

Abrantès, D. d'Alencastre, 2nd Duke of, I. 448
Achy, F. P. de Carvoisin, Marquis d', I. 52, 60, 61, 65–67
Acquaviva, François, Cardinal, V. 40
Adoncourt, D. Suart d', VI. 337, 338, 441
Agen, Bishop of, *see* Hébert
Aguilar-del-Campo, Marquis d', III. 311.—IV. 291, 301, 384
Aiguillon, Marie-Thérèse de Wignerod, Duchess d', II. 234–236
Aire, Bishop of, *see* Besons, A. B. de
Aix, Archbishop of, *see* Cosnac
Alba, A. M. A. Manrique, Duke of, II. 149, 246, 248, 251, 258, 259.—III. 299, 301.—IV. 49, 76
— Isabella Ponce de Leon, Duchess of, II. 258, 259
Albemarle, A. J., Van Keppel, Earl of, I. 267.—II. 485, 488
Albergotti, F. Z. P., Count, I. 54, 58, 62, 88, 118.—II. 263, 391–393, 397, 398.—III. 341–343.—IV. 56, 61, 63, 98
Alberoni, Jules, Cardinal, II. 342, 343.—III. 32, 118–124, 128, 130, 184, 185.—IV. 484.—V. 41, 87, 91, 120, 392, 393, 447–450.—VI. 20, 27, 59, 60, 62, 63, 68, 103, 123, 193, 195, 199, 203, 212, 218, 219, 240–242, 254, 263, 380, 383, 409
Albert, M. L., Count d', I. 80, 135, 292, 430.—II. 84, 113, 332
Albret, C. P., Marshal d', I. 194
— E. T., Duke d', I. 360.—III. 272.—VI. 159
— M. A., Duchess d', IV. 440
Albuquerque, F. F. de la Cueva, Duke d', II. 420.—VI. 424
Alby, Archbishop of, *see* Nesmond
Alègre, Yves, Marquis d', I. 153, 324.—II. 247, 407.—V. 48.—VI. 18. 19. 213
— Mme. de, II. 251.—VI. 18, 19, 186, 187
Alençon, Duke d', IV. 437
Almonacid, C. H. P., Marquis of, I. 522
Altamira, Countess of, V. 92
Ambres, F. de G. de Voisin, Marquis M. d', I. 279.—IV. 208
Amelot, M. J., Marquis de Gournay, II. 260, 374, 377, 378.—III. 19, 209, 299, 319, 326, 327.—IV. 80, 228.—V. 44, 359, 360.—VI. 331, 332
Amiens, Bishop of, *see* Brou, H. J. F. de
— Louis Auguste d'Albert de Chevreuse, Vidame d', afterwards Duke de Chaulnes, II. 165, 166, 167, 203.—III. 113.—IV. 198, 287; for later references, *see* Chaulnes, Duke de
Ancenis, P. F. de Béthune, Marquis d', VI. 202
Andigné, Abbé d', V. 441, 442
Angers, Bishop of, *see* Peletier, M. le
Angoulême, F. de Nargonne, Duchess of, IV. 448
— M. H. de la Guiche, Duchess d', I. 1, 48
Anjou, Louis, Duke of, afterwards Louis XV, III. 4, 449.—IV. 350, 351, 353, 375, 390.—V. 3, 16–18, 84, 182, 216, 217, 244–246, 251; for later references, *see* Louis XV
— Philip, Duke d', *see* Philip V, King of Spain
Anne of Austria, Queen-mother and Regent, I. ix, x, 39, 42, 44–46, 49, 70, 71, 162, 399, 400.—II. 5, 232, 292, 294.—III. 161.—IV. 92, 273, 311, 451.—V. 167, 202, 271, 272.—VI. 501
Anne, Princess of Denmark, afterwards Queen of England, I. 123.—II. 38, 43, 201.—III. 51, 53, 55.—IV. 287, 322.—V. 2, 3, 388
Anneuil, N. Frémont, Seigneur d', M. de, I. 129
Anspach, W. F. von Brandenburg, Prince of, II. 64
Anthony, King of Navarre, I. 12
Antin, L. A. d' J. de Pardaillon, Marquis d', afterwards Duke, I. 444, 534.—II. 319, 320, 322, 326, 415, 450, 488, 498. 507.—III, 20, 21, 36, 79–81, 132–134, 138, 139, 262, 274, 279, 296, 298, 324, 325, 345, 351, 377. 416, 459, 463, 499, 505, 506, 508, 516.—IV, 8, 19–23, 25, 27, 31, 38, 101–112, 116, 124, 151, 156, 158, 167, 184, 185, 191, 226, 245, 250, 272, 313, 314, 393, 404, 438.—V. 2, 9, 41, 63–70, 74, 75, 160, 323, 354, 355, 375, 463, 512–515.—VI. 12–14, 38, 48, 54, 142. 144, 146, 155, 159, 180, 199
Aquin, Abbé de, afterwards Bishop of Séez, I. 68, 352
— Antoine d', First Physician to the King, I. 68, 69, 321, 354, 355
— Pierre d', Physician-in-Ordinary to the King, I. 68, 69
Arco, Duchesse del, III. 380.—VI. 437
— J. B., Count del, II. 187, 191
— J. Ponce d', Leon, 7th Duke del, I. 526.—II. 150.—VI. 381, 384–386, 392, 397–399, 402, 415, 423, 430, 432, 433, 435, 437
— R. M., Marquis d', I. 59.—V. 127
Arennes, F. de Pierre, Marquis d', II. 395
Argenson, M. R. de Voyer de Paulmy d', I. 214.—II. 445.—III. 238, 276, 320, 332, 334, 365.—IV. 118. 232, 233, 380, 381.—V. 192, 451, 452.—VI. 31–35, 38, 43, 44, 49, 66, 70, 71, 74, 76, 77, 94, 96, 97, 122, 127–130, 132, 137–139, 142–146, 148–153, 160, 162–168, 171, 191–193, 197, 199, 200, 208, 249, 269, 270, 279
Argenton, Mme., *see* Séry, Mlle.
Arias, don Manuel, Bishop of Seville, and Cardinal, II. 134, 138, 148.—IV. 412
Arles, Archbishop of, *see* Mailly; Janson
Arling, Colonel, II. 283
Armagnac, Prince Camille d', Lorraine, I. 217, 317.—II. 480, 481
— C. de Neufville-Villeroy, Countess de, I. 122, 216, 217, 329–334, 389, 402.—II. 26. 164, 359, 481.—III. 26–29, 211, 252, 270.—VI. 55
— Charlotte de Lorraine, Mlle. d', I. 125, 154, 251, 330, 334.—II. 2, 26, 156, 157, 169, 359.—IV. 411, 527
— Louis de Lorraine, Count d', The Grand Equerry, "M. le Grand," I. 13–15, 18, 98, 121, 150, 154, 155, 216, 217, 317, 318, 329, 331, 332, 354, 370, 371, 387, 390, 391, 402, 504.—II. 28, 156–158, 160–163, 169, 204–206, 217, 241, 245, 359, 469, 470, 480, 481.—III. 27–30, 90, 166, 167, 211, 253, 267, 269, 270, 295, 340.—IV. 374, 411.—VI. 38, 54–56

Armenonville, J. J. B. F. d', I. 501.—II. 139.—III. 18, 43, 111
Armentières, M. de Conflans, Marquis d', I. 212
— Marquise d', IV. 482
Arnauld, A., II. 122.—III. 359.—IV. 120
Arnoul, Mme., I. 359, 360
— M., Intendant of Marine, I. 359
Arouet, *see* Voltaire
Arpajon, Marquis d', VI. 443
— Duchess d', *see* Rouse, Marquise de
Arquin, H. de la Grange, Marquis d', afterwards Cardinal d', II. 511–513
Arras, Bishop of, *see* Rochechouart, G. de Sève
Artagnan, C. de Batz de Castelmore, Count d', III. 346, 347
— d', of the Grey Musketeers, III. 347.—IV. 388.—VI. 460, 461, 464
— P. de Montesquiou d', afterwards Duke and Marshal de la Montesquiou, II. 41.—III. 148, 335, 344, 346–348, 434.—IV. 54, 56, 68, 273, 386–388.—VI. 17, 18
Asfeld, Chevalier, d' II. 62, 63
Asturias, Louis Philippe de Bourbon, Prince of the, I. xv.—III. 11, 272.—V. 99, 455.—VI. 310, 324, 325, 331–333, 343, 345, 347, 350, 351, 354, 356, 358, 362–364, 385, 386, 392–398, 462, 414, 424, 434, 438, 439
— Princess of, *see* Montpensier, Mlle. de
Athlone, G. de Ginkel, 1st Earl of, I. 62.—II. 43
Aubenton, d' (clerk in Navy Office), IV. 220–222, 238
— Guillaume, Father d', IV. 455, 460, 461.—V. 99.—VI. 20, 356, 371, 407, 434, 446, 485, 488
Aubépine, Charlotte de l', *see* Saint-Simon, Duchess de
Aubercourt, André le Picard, Father d', II. 44.—V. 113, 114
Aubeterre, P. B. d'E. de Lussan, Count d', II. 385
Aubigné, Charles, Count d', I. 35, 246–249, 276.—V. 301
— Mlle. F. C. A., d', I. 251, 275, 276, afterwards Countess d'Ayen, *q.v.*
— G. P. P., Countess d', I. 276
Aubigny, C. M. d', Bishop of Noyon, afterwards Archbishop of Rouen, I. 471.—II. 122.—III. 26.—V. 46, 375.—VI. 190, 192, 216, 218
— J. Bouteroue, called, II. 137, 174.—IV. 481, 482
Aubusson, Georges d', Archbishop of Metz, I. 227, 228
Aumont, F. A. de la Motte Houdancourt, Duchess d', II. 306–308, 311.—III. 166, 424.—IV. 415, 416, 497
— L. M. V., Duke d', I. 169, 253.—II. 308, 408.—III. 60, 166, 243, 451,—IV. 218, 358, 392, 414–417.—V. 2, 63–65, 69–74, 160, 374.—VI. 67, 76, 113, 124, 160
Autun, Bishop of, *see* Roquette, Maulévrier, Dromesnil
Auvergne, Elizabeth, Countess d'. II. 210, 211
— F. E. de la Tour, Prince d', II. 53–55.—III. 2, 24, 183.—IV. 65
— F. M. de la Tour, Count d', I. 34, 214, 342, 413.—II. 109, 110, 211, 355, 438.—III. 24
— H. O. de la Tour, Abbé de, afterwards Cardinal, I. 223, 272, 273, 410, 415.—II. 113.—III. 24.—VI. 252–254
Auxerre, Bishop of, *see* Caylus, Abbé de
Avaux, J. A. de Mesme, Count d', II. 130, 131.—III. 206, 208, 209.—IV. 307
Avranches, Bishop of, *see* Huet, P. D.; Brulart; Coettanfao
Avrincourt, F D. de Cardevac, Baron, afterwards Marquis d', II. 253
Ayen, A. M. de Noailles, Count d', afterwards Duke de Noailles, I. 275, 276, 469.—II. 1, 17, 64, 65, 122–124, 168. For later references *see* Noailles, Duke de
— F. C. A. Daubigné, Countess d', afterwards Duchess de Noailles, I. 276, 347.—II. 1, 156. For later references *see* Noailles, Duchess of
— L. F., Mlle. d', I. 251, 263. Afterwards Countess d'Estrées, *q.v.*

Bachelier, First Valet of the Wardrobe, II. 112.—III. 266
Baden, Louis-G., Prince of, I. 53, 134, 196, 206, 459.—II. 55, 64, 65, 75, 76, 128, 129, 141, 142, 190, 201, 212, 279, 280, 283, 388, 414
Bagnolz, D. L. D. de, Intendant of Lille, III. 84–87
Bailly, E. Hallé, Mme., I. 169
— G., Abbé, I., 305
Balbien, Mlle., I. 185, 187.—V. 309
Bannière (courier), VI. 435, 436
Baños, G. Prince de Leon, Duke of, I. 526.—II. 150
Baradas, F. de, First Equerry under Louis XIII, I. 36
Barbançon, O. I., Prince de, Duke d'Aubray I. 7, 62
Barbésieux, L. F. M. le Tellier, Marquis de, I. 9, 10, 23, 29, 65, 104, 116, 117, 131–134, 153, 176, 196, 209, 291, 323, 324, 357, 358, 449, 451, 459–462.—II. 16, 96, 103.—III. 290, 414.—V. 268
— M. T. D. E. d'Alègre, Mme. de, I. 251, 323, 324.—II. 347, 407
Baron, M. Boy, known as, II. 1
Barre, A. du Château de, La, II. 288, 289, 318, 409, 410
Barrois (envoy of the Duke of Lorraine), II. 482
Bart, Jean, I. 235.—II. 38
Bassompierre, F., Marshal de, I. 107
Basville, N. de, Marquis of, Intendant of Languedoc, I. 117, 209, 210, 478.—II. 114, 126, 186, 290.—V. 516–519.—VI. 23
Bavaria, Maximilian-Emmanuel, Elector of, I. 62, 135, 139, 140, 206, 338.—II. 55, 63, 111, 128, 129, 141–144, 147, 188, 190–193, 195, 199, 289, 361, 364, 366, 367, 411, 424.—III. 1, 64, 72, 109, 350–352, 371, 380.—IV. 184, 249.—V. 1, 41, 329.—VI. 234
Bay, A. Maître, Marquis de, II. 409, 419, 456.—III. 272.—IV. 73–76
Bayeux, Bishop of, *see* Nesmond
Beauffremont, Duras, Mlle. de, II. 222, 263
— L. B., Marquis de, V. 357, 483, 485, 489
Beaufort, F. de Vendôme, Duke de, VI. 27, 245, 275, 456
Beaujolais, Philippe, Elizabeth d'Orléans, Mlle. (5th daughter of Duke of Orleans), VI. 476
Beaumanoir, E. C., Marquis de, II. 110, 145
— Marie Françoise de Noailles, Mme. de, V. 232, 233, 235
Beaumont, L. de, Abbé de, I. 281
Beauvais, Bishop of, *see* Saint-Aignan
— C. H. Ballier, Mme. de, I. 70, 71
— L. de Baron de, I. 70, 71, 74
Beauvau, Bishop of Tournai, III. 144, 336
Beauvau-Craon, Marc, Marquis de, II. 338
Beauvilliers, H. L. Colbert, Duchess de, I. 75–78, 128, 182, 250, 282, 283, 285, 457, 534.—II. 21, 94, 151, 203, 302, 317, 410.—III. 37, 203, 286.—IV. 196, 204–207, 395.—V. 21, 28, 31–33.—VI. 189, 311, 379, 408, 409

Beauvilliers, Paul de, Saint-Aignan, Duke of, I. xiii, xiv, 34, 65, 67, 75–78, 84, 95, 105, 128, 143, 182, 196, 197, 205, 220, 222, 223, 225, 227, 245, 253, 278–282, 285, 291, 304, 305, 343, 357, 359. 369, 371, 381, 391, 449, 454, 457, 474, 475, 485, 500, 502, 503, 534.—II. 6, 7, 10–12, 84, 85, 94, 111, 136, 138, 139, 151, 158, 162, 172, 173, 244, 248, 269, 287, 301, 302, 310, 314–317, 321, 322, 327, 343, 354, 410, 416, 432, 445.—III. 36–39, 41, 43, 48, 49, 65–72, 82, 86, 99, 109, 117, 118, 125–128, 130, 140, 156, 160, 161, 178, 181, 182, 184, 187, 196, 197, 200, 203, 205, 210, 214, 224–231, 233, 236, 253, 267, 273, 276, 284–286, 292, 296, 297, 300–306, 316, 323, 361, 421, 424, 442, 448, 467, 484, 485, 490, 494–497, 503, 505, 507, 508, 510, 513.—IV. 3, 30, 51, 67, 68, 71, 72, 84, 91, 93, 105, 128, 139, 141, 143, 157, 166, 178, 188, 190, 192, 194, 196–201, 204–208, 216, 225–231, 233–240, 243, 245, 246, 248, 249, 253, 254, 256, 258, 260, 266, 268, 269, 271, 274–279, 281, 283, 294, 299–303, 329, 335, 337, 338, 340, 349, 352–354, 362, 363, 366, 371, 375, 376, 378, 379, 398–400, 424, 433, 434, 437, 462, 518–520.—V. 16–34, 36, 39, 82–84, 156, 226, 304, 308.—VI. 188, 311, 408, 409, 528

Béchameil, L., II. 116, 117.—III. 169

Bedmar, I. J., Marquis de, I. 456.—VI. 348

Bellefonds, Bernardin-Gigault, Marshal de, I. 21, 34, 193, 194, 322.—II. 75.—IV. 492

— M. F. de Chalain, Maréchale de, I. 195.—III. 328

— M. Gigault, Mlle. de, afterwards Marquise de Villars, I. 270

Bellegarde, R. de Saint-Liary, Duke de, I. 39

— M. de, II. 318, 319

Bellesbat, II. 347

Bellisle, C. L. A. Fousquet, Count de, VI. 313–315, 327, 328, 333, 426, 427, 436, 442, 444, 445, 450, 458, 467, 474, 475, 484, 495

Belluga, L. A., Bishop of Murcia, II. 375

Belzunce (Belsunce-Castelmiron, H. F. X.), Abbé de, Bishop of Marseilles, III. 244

Bentivoglio, Camielle (Nuncio), V. 352, 359, 408, 422, 472, 479–482.—VI. 53, 54

Berger de Malissoles, F., Bishop of Gap, IV. 123, 285, 286

Bergheyck, J. de Brouchoven de, II. 411.—III. 50, 51, 74, 109, 232

Beringhen, J. L., Marquis de, The First Equerry, "M. le Premier," I. 13, 45.—II. 105, 417, 435–437, 464,—III. 63, 80, 81, 243, 306, 440, 441, 517.—IV. 8, 106, 151, 191, 195, 238, 239, 426, 510.—V. 160, 489.—VI. 168

— M. M. E. Fare, Mme. de, I. 250.—II. 103.—V. 160, 489

Berlips, Countess von, I. 338, 447

Bermudez, Father, VI. 488

Bernard, Samuel, II. 376.—III. 75, 76, 241

Bernaville, Charles le Fournier, Sieur de, III. 163

Berry, Charles de France, Duke of, I. xiv, 253, 325, 454, 456, 503.—II. 124, 304, 383, 389, 414, 449.—III. 8, 14, 62, 65, 71, 72, 107–113, 115, 119, 138, 151, 153, 154, 179, 181–183, 231, 297, 329, 396, 425, 457, 459–462, 498–500, 502, 504–506, 508, 509, 512, 513,—IV. 3, 4, 13, 21–23, 29, 30, 36, 47, 50–53, 59, 72, 92–94, 130, 131, 135, 140, 141, 143, 144, 155, 159–162, 168–170, 172, 175, 176, 216, 254–256, 259–262, 264–266, 272, 273, 311, 316, 317, 325, 329–331, 336, 351–353, 360, 369, 374–376, 390, 392, 393, 406, 419, 428–433, 437, 466, 469, 477, 495–502, 514.—V. 1, 16, 27, 103, 127, 130, 145, 146, 151, 152, 167

Berry, Marie Louise Elizabeth d'Orléans, Duchess of, For previous references *see* Orleans, 135, Mlle. d'. IV. 50–53, 72, 92, 93, 130, 131, 139–141, 143, 144, 149, 155, 159, 160, 162, 169–177, 255, 256, 259, 261–266, 272, 311, 312, 314, 325, 329, 330, 351, 352, 360, 374, 393, 403–405, 432, 437, 442–446, 466, 469, 471, 477, 494–496, 498, 500–502, 504, 505, 520.—V. 1, 37, 50, 94, 101, 103, 130, 140, 143–149, 162, 202, 238, 245, 307, 311, 347, 357, 358, 413–416.—VI. 179, 180, 188, 189, 213–215, 222–227, 519

Bertier, D. N. de, Bishop of Blois, III. 103

Berwick, Anne, Duchess of, II. 454

— James FitzJames, Duke of, I. 32, 57, 164, 261.—II. 43, 148, 173, 205, 236, 242, 318, 346, 374, 375, 377, 378, 409, 424, 453–456, 458.—III. 8, 24, 31, 64, 72, 109, 113, 114, 120, 144, 148, 151, 154, 157, 173, 174, 187, 231.—IV. 56–59, 104, 107, 481, 485.—V. 42, 49, 160, 428, 429.—VI. 193, 194, 208, 232, 233, 258, 298, 329, 407, 408, 427, 443, 458, 484, 485

Besons, Arnaud Bezin, de, Archbishop of Bordeaux, afterwards of Rouen, II. 286.—III. 433.—IV. 271, 272, 285.—V. 354, 355, 505.—VI. 2, 233, 259, 260, 525

— J. Bazin, Marshal de, II. 399, 402.—III. 299, 311, 335, 375–378, 383–389, 392–398, 400–406, 408–411, 413, 423, 425, 430–434.—IV. 403, 404, 470.—V. 355, 373, 429, 471, 482, 488, 505.—VI. 65, 109, 143, 144, 146, 148, 154, 155, 159

Béthoulat, André de, *see* Vauguyon, Count de la

Béthune, Arnaud, Marquis de Charost, Duke de, I. 357, 388.—III. 186.—IV. 205, 514

— M. Fousquet, Duchess de, I. 145, 285.—III. 38, 448.—IV. 205, 283

— S. M. L. de la Grange d'Arquin, Marquis de, I. 207.—II. 511, 512

Béthune-Orval, Marquis de, III. 55, 171.—IV. 93

Beuvron, H. d'Harcourt, Count de, I. 187, 520, 521.—III. 166.—V. 288

— L. de Rochefort de Thésbon, Countess de, I. 389, 390, 519.—II. 30, 32.—III. 166

— Odet d'Harcourt, Abbé de, I. 322

Bignon, Jean Paul, Abbé, I. 470, 471.—V. 407

— Jérôme, Councillor of State, M., I. 213

— Jérôme. VI. 274

— de Blanzy, A. Roland, III. 306.—IV. 9–13, 15, 16, 155, 195

Biron, C. A. de Gontaut, Marquis de, afterwards Duke and Marshal of France, I. 191.—III. 110, 111, 115–117, 121.—IV. 192.—V. 133, 134, 383, 416, 428, 454.—VI. 171, 172, 262, 464, 482, 483, 513, 515

— E. de Cossé Binac, Marquise de, III. 414.—VI. 513

Bissy, H. de Thiard, de, successively Bishop of Toul, and of Meaux, and Cardinal, I 226, 227, 533, 534.—II. 172.—IV. 120, 270. 271, 286, 452, 456, 459, 460, 462, 465.—V. 43, 171, 173, 184, 206, 242–244, 319, 352. 359, 422, 439, 478.—VI. 92, 452–454, 489, 497

Blacksmith of Salon, The, I. 357–360

Blainville, J. de Warguier, Seigneurr de, I. 36

— J. A. Colbert, Marquis de, II. 194, 347

Blamont, Auguste, *Président-aux-Enquêtes*, VI. 172, 183, 193

Blancmesnil, G. de Lamoignon, Seigneur de, VI. 132, 168

Blansac, C. de la Rochefoucauld de Roye, Count de, I. 186, 218.—II. 191–193.—V. 381

— M. H. de Rochefort-d'Aloigny, Mme. de, I. 185–187, 323, 341.—II. 214, 215, 490.—III. 101, 102,—IV. 25.—V. 267, 380

Blécourt, J. D., Marquis de, I. 418, 436, 448
Blois, Louis, *Valet-de-chambre* to the King, I. 156, 467.—II. 279, 297, 478.—III. 117, 123, 129, 133, 198, 260, 324, 325.—IV. 146, 211, 365, 372, 494.—V. 3, 34, 114, 115, 242, 251, 320, 438, 512.—VI. 217
Blois, Bishop of, *see* Bertier, D. N. de
Boile, René Mascon de, Captain, II. 348
Boileau, Canon of St. Honoré, I. 336, 337, 473.—II. 183, 332, 333
Boileaux-Despréaux, Nicolas, I. 347, 348.—IV. 117.—V. 30
Boisguilbert, P. le Pesant, Seigneur de, II. 431–434.—IV. 81
Boisselot, A. de Rainier, Marquis de, I. 319
Boisseuil, François de, III. 210–212
Boissieux, Cornet of the Royal-Rousillon, I. 55, 56
Bonamour, M. de Talhouet, de VI. 20
Bonneuil, M. C., Baron de, I. 320
Bonneval, C. A., Chevalier de, afterwards Count, II. 355, 356.—V. 454
Bontems, A., I. 22, 34, 41, 258, 354, 355, 466, 467, 478, —II. 183, 297.—VI. 505, 506
Bonzi, Pierre, Cardinal I. 209, 210, 322.—II. 125, 127, 186.—V. 55
Bordage, Mlle, de, I. 395
Bordeaux, Antoine de, I. 23
— Archbishop of, *see* Besons, A. B. de
Borgia, F., Cardinal, II. 39.—VI. 391, 394, 437, 438
Bossuet, J. B., Bishop of Meaux, I. xii, 145, 148, 182, 220, 221, 224, 226–228, 259, 278, 280, 281, 283–285, 291, 306, 425, 474.—II. 72, 73, 86, 87, 172, 494.—III. 214.—IV. 150, 156.—V. 81, 298, 299
Boucher, N. R., I. 362.—VI. 336,, 443
Boucherat, L., Chancellor, I. 203, 244, 362, 369, 375.—II. 306.—III. 196
Boudin, Jean, II. 63.—IV. 95, 96, 126, 132, 133, 313, 331, 357, 358, 361.—V. 357.—VI. 49, 50
Boufflers, C. C. de Grammont, Maréchale de, I. 217, 250.—II. 155, 179.—VI. 13, 14
— L. F., Marquis de, afterwards Marshal de, Duke de, I. 29. 33, 34, 52–54, 58, 105, 135, 139, 140, 172, 209, 239–241, 295–297, 299, 300, 302, 331–333, 480, 482.—II. 34, 42, 43, 95, 144, 225, 226, 259, 341.—III. 13, 62, 85, 125, 142, 156, 157, 159, 160, 171, 177, 183–191, 201, 231, 242–244, 274, 275, 277, 292, 295–297, 300–305, 322, 333–335, 337, 338, 342–346, 348–350, 374, 420, 425, 430, 437–439, 508, 510, 513.—IV. 42, 70, 105, 106, 111, 118, 183, 192, 219, 280–282, 337.—V. 34, 159
Bouillon, E. T. de la Tour d'Auvergne, Cardinal de, I. 7, 24, 26, 148, 223, 224, 253, 263, 271–273, 279, 312, 341, 343, 410, 412–414, 423, 424, 432, 433, 455, 459.—II. 54, 60, 109, 110, 113, 260, 261, 277, 278, 313, 438.—III. 96–99, 194, 279.—IV. 64–67, 458, 459, 507.—V. 96–99.—VI. 242, 252, 254
— F. J. de la Tour, Chevalier de, II. 347
— Maurice, Duke de, I. 87, 90, 104, 123, 276, 277, 360, 386, 388–390.—II. 38, 54, 60, 166, 222, 308, 438.—III. 62, 124, 128, 203, 221, 267, 276, 279, 452, 517.—IV. 51, 127, 167, 472, 505, 508
— M. A., Duchess de, I. 28, 83, 277, 250, 490.—II. 407, 438, 446.—III. 124, 128, 424.—IV. 505–509
— Mlle, de, IV. 127
Boulainvilliers, Henri de, V. 115, 116.—VI. 123, 124
Boulduc, G. F., the King's apothecary, IV. 357, 495.—VI. 272, 315
Boulez (Boultz), René de, Abbé de, II. 311
Bouligneux, Louis de la Polu, Marquis de, Lieut.-General, II. 233
Bourbon, Charles de, *see* Vendôme, Duke of
— Louis, Duke of, "M. le Duc," afterwards Prince of Condé, I. 4, 12, 33, 54, 59, 66, 74, 84, 132, 136, 156, 193, 208, 236, 243, 352, 407, 482, 497, 530.—II. 45, 161, 169, 197, 212, 258, 370, 380, 383, 402, 457, 458, 487–490, 500, 504.—III. 4, 5, 13, 29, 103, 135, 150, 169, 217, 218, 220–223, 239, 243, 246, 247, 251–255, 292, 297, 313, 323, 347, 348, 417–419, 433, 435–437, 451–458, 461, 463, 464, 466, 473, 499.—IV. 56, 95, 189, 508.—V. 244, 505.—VI. 89, 486
— Louis-Henri, Duke of, "M. le Duc," for previous references *see* Enghien, Duke of, III. 453, 463, 464, 474.—IV. 24, 115–117, 316, 317, 360, 376, 431, 444, 501, 514, 518, 529.—V. 190, 244, 337, 339, 341–343, 348, 351, 355, 405, 408, 515, 518, 519.—VI. 22, 70, 74–77, 79–96, 99–106, 108–121, 123–133, 138–140, 142, 143, 145, 146, 148–154, 158, 159, 162, 167, 168, 171, 176, 180, 182, 189–191, 200–202, 206, 207, 230, 245, 263, 267–269, 277, 279, 292–296, 305, 306, 318–323, 456–458, 480, 499, 500, 517, 518, 520, 522
— Louise Françoise, Duchess of Lorraine, afterwards Duchess of Condé, daughter of the King, Mme. "la Duchesse," I. 12, 25, 105. 108, 151, 152, 156, 178, 208, 209, 234, 236, 252, 293, 300, 315, 350, 407, 490.—II. 197, 221, 327, 379, 402, 423, 441, 449, 467, 470, 487–490, 500, 507.—III. 15, 19, 36, 68, 80, 103, 118, 134–139, 200, 217, 218, 220, 246, 254, 292, 296, 298, 313, 324, 418, 424, 425, 429, 430, 433, 452, 454–457, 459, 460, 462–464, 475, 498–506, 508–513, 517, 518.—IV. 7, 8, 10, 11, 15, 17, 23–26, 38, 40, 50, 52, 61, 87, 114–117, 124, 127, 129, 133–135, 139, 140, 145, 149, 153–155, 158, 168, 186, 189–191, 196, 226, 290, 316, 324, 349, 360, 361, 442, 445, 446, 523.—V. 41, 152, 160–162, 245, 330, 343, 355, 513, 514.—VI. 22, 87, 89, 90, 180, 181, 189, 263
— Mlle. de, III. 498, 502, 504–506, 508, 509, 512.—IV. 3, 17, 21, 50, 53, 155, 160, 265, 376
Bourdaloue, Louis, Father, I. 119, 225.—III. 507.—V. 82.—VI. 488
Bourg, L. M. du Maine, Count du, II. 348, 414.—III. 339, 340, 440.—IV. 98
Bourges, Bishop of, *see* Gesvres
Bourke, Toby, Chevalier, II. 260, 261.—VI. 383
Bourlie, Antoine de Guiscard, Abbé de la, I. 407.—IV. 123, 124
Bournonville, Mlle. de, *see* Duras, Duchess de
— Philippe Alexandre, Prince de, V. 231–233
Boutteville, E. A., Duchess of, I. 179
— F. de, Montmorency, Duc de, I. 80
Bouville, Intendant of Orleans, II. 434.—IV. 82
Bouzol, L. J. de Montaigu, Marquis de, I. 156
Bouzols, Marquise de, IV. 226
Bracciano, A. M. de la Trémouille, Duchess of, afterwards Princess des Ursins, I. xiii, 125, 127–129, 153, 157, 263, 270, 271, 296, 522–526, 529—II. 6, 39, 85, 133–137, 148, 149, 172–181, 186, 187, 205, 219, 242–249, 255–261, 267–269, 274–279, 311, 346, 350, 375, 377, 378, 474.—III. 104–106, 172, 263, 299, 301, 307–310, 312, 314, 315, 319, 326, 505.—IV. 72, 163, 228, 292, 293, 380, 383, 384, 404, 412, 481–486, 504, 509.—V. 40, 42, 48, 86–92, 99–103, 118–120, 142, 157, 173, 212, 226, 360, 364, 392, 448.—VI. 242, 252, 330, 346, 362, 380, 383, 384, 481
— F. Orsino, 5th Duke of, I. 263, 270, 271, 278

Brancas, Abbé de, IV. 164
— Charles, Duke de, I. 329.—II. 117, 118.—III. 437
— Marquise de, III. 437.—V. 104
— Marquise de, II. 373, 419.—III. 437.—IV. 485, 486, 494.—V. 91.—VI. 242, 328, 365
— M. de, Duchess de, I. 142.—II. 117, 118.—IV. 35, 352
Brandenburg, Frederic III, Elector of, II. 510, 511.—III. 1
Bréauté, III. 169
Bregny, Mme. de, II. 347
Bressé, J. C., Baron de, I. 5
Bretesche, E. de Jousseaume, Marquis de la, I. 135
Breteuil, L. N. de Toumellier, Baron de, I. 320.—V. 93, 94.—VI. 485–487
Bretonneau, *Valet-de-chambre* to the author, I. 60
Brias, J. T. de, Archbishop of Cambrai, I. 141
Brionne, H. de Lorraine, Count de, I. 181.—II. 318, 349.—III. 211, 269.—IV. 374
Briord, G., Count de, I. 468
Brisacier, M., I. 149
Brissac, A. de Grillet, Marquis de, III. 56–58.—IV. 414
— A. T. L., Count de Cossé, and Duke de, nephew of the author, I. 325–328, 357, 402.—II. 116, 221, 305–311.—III. 272.—IV. 107.—V. 367.—VI. 289
— H. de Cossé, Duke de, brother-in-law of the author, I. 1, 47, 48, 90, 211, 325–328.—III. 414, 482
— M. G. L. de Saint-Simon, Duchess de, sister of the author, I. 7, 47, 48, 211.—II. 483
Brittany, Louis, Duke of, II. 190, 200, 263, 329, 414.—III. 191.—IV. 282, 283, 350, 351, 365, 376
Broglio, II. 114.—IV. 373, 387.—V. 416, 429.—VI. 46–48, 73, 208
— M. de Lanoignon, Countess de, II. 290
Brou, H. J. F. de, Bishop of Amiens, I. 226, 227.—VI. 211
Brue, Father de la, IV. 39, 40
Bruges, Sieur de, VI. 338, 442
Brulart, Bishop of Soissons, V. 45–47
Bruyère, Jean de La, I. 168.—VI. 284, 500
Budas, D. H. de, *see* Saint-Simon, Duchess de
Bulkeley, Francis, II, 454, 462
Burgundy, Louis de France, Duke of, I. xiv, 20, 23, 24, 143, 145, 176, 182, 200, 201, 228, 253, 264, 279, 281, 282, 297, 300, 302, 380, 386, 424, 425, 441, 451–453, 456, 480, 493, 509.—II. 34, 40–43, 80, 82, 85, 128, 132, 145, 155–157, 159, 190, 202, 213, 263, 314–316, 322, 325, 350–352, 354, 383, 389, 407, 449, 450, 471, 478, 489, 511.—III. 8, 25, 36, 63, 64, 65–72, 94, 107–131, 139, 141–149, 151–155, 160, 161, 172, 173, 175, 177–184, 186, 187, 196, 200, 216, 219, 226, 231, 259, 253, 273–275, 281, 296, 297, 300, 302, 305, 309, 315, 316, 322–324, 337, 350, 351, 372, 383, 395, 418, 424, 442, 443, 457, 459, 467–470, 478, 484–497, 505.—IV. 11, 19, 21–23, 30, 33, 38, 39, 44, 59, 74, 87, 88, 99, 126, 127, 130, 135, 137, 139–141, 143, 144, 154, 158–161, 166–169, 171, 176–179, 181, 185, 187, 190–193, 200, 207–213, 215, 217, 226, 228, 232, 234, 326,–241, 244–260, 267–274, 281–283, 293, 294, 299, 302, 303, 305, 313, 316, 318–320, 323, 324, 329–353, 356, 358–360, 362, 363, 374–378, 383, 495, 498.—V. 18, 23, 28, 34, 81, 127, 151, 168, 169, 174, 176, 182, 190, 226, 311, 313, 346, 492, 522.—VI. 188, 224, 294, 295, 379, 396, 398, 528
Burgundy, Marie-Adelaide of Savoy, Duchess of, I. xiii, xiv, 23, *see* Savoy, Princess of, 253, 260, 282, 297, 299–302, 328–331, 346, 361, 373, 374, 380, 402, 403, 406, 421, 426, 427, 454, 456, 457, 477, 485, 491, 493, 509–511, 527, 529.—II. 1, 6, 12, 21, 49, 50, 80, 82, 83, 85, 106, 117, 121, 122, 133, 134, 167, 170, 182, 200, 206, 213–218, 224, 232, 248, 252, 253, 257, 259, 263, 286, 298, 317, 329, 350–355, 383, 388, 406, 408, 414, 415, 423, 449, 454, 465, 466, 471, 475–479, 489, 498, 501, 511.—III. 15–18, 32, 35, 36, 61–63, 68, 70, 84, 94, 106, 114, 115, 117, 126–131, 133–139, 145, 156, 162, 163, 171, 174, 178–182, 188, 220, 226, 322, 259–263, 273, 274, 280, 281, 286, 295, 297, 302, 306, 315, 316, 319, 322–326, 329, 351, 370, 372, 373, 395, 396, 421, 422, 424, 449, 457, 459, 461, 462, 469–471, 478, 483, 489, 494, 498, 500, 502–504, 509, 510, 512, 513, 515, 516, 517.—IV. 3–7, 11, 13, 14, 19–21, 30–34, 38–43, 45, 51, 52, 61–64, 72–74, 89–92, 94, 97, 99, 114, 126, 130, 135–141, 143, 144, 149, 151, 153, 157–162, 166–177, 182, 183, 185, 187–196, 208, 211, 214, 232, 234, 245, 246, 249, 255–260, 273, 282, 292–294, 301, 305, 306, 310–313, 316–329, 332, 336, 346–351, 355, 357–363, 374–376, 383, 405, 449, 492, 495, 498, 499.—V. 34, 140, 226, 301, 307, 311, 313, 326, 330, 381.—VI. 223, 224, 294, 396, 398, 401, 483
Burnet, Gilbert, Bishop of Salisbury, I. 434, 436
Bury, M. A. d'Ure d'Aiguebonne, Countess de, I. 108
Bussy-Rabutin, R. de, Count de, I. 166.—II. 57, 265, 442
Byng, Admiral, VI. 62

Caderousse, Duchess de, IV. 71
— Duke de, IV. 71
Cadogan, II. 388.—III. 158, 341
Cahors, Bishop of, *see* Vendôme
Caillières, F. de, I. 205, 239, 417, 463.—II. 301, 320, 321, 324
Cambrai, Archbishop of, *see* Brias, M. de; Fénelon, Abbé; Estrées, Abbé d'; Trémouille, Cardinal de la; Dubois, Cardinal; Clermont-Chaste, L. de
Camilly, F. Blouet de, Grand-Vicar of Strasbourg, I. 409, 414
Caminiec, I. 233, 234
Cammock, Admiral, VI. 60
Campistron, J. G. de, III. 123, 124
Campredon, Jacques de, III. 6, 7
Camus, Étienne, Cardinal de, I. 445, —II. 404.—VI. 235
Canaples, A. de Créquy, Count de, afterwards Duke de Lesdiguières, II. 56, 57, 140.—IV. 32, 279
Cani, Marquis de, II. 413, 414.—III. 37, 146, 150, 290.—V. 442
— Marquise de, III. 37, 38, 40, 203.—V. 442
Canillac, P. de Montboissier Beaufort, Marquis de, I. 300, 301.—II. 254.—IV. 518.—V. 193, 338, 344, 352, 353, 374, 391, 399, 416, 421, 429, 436, 437, 444.—VI. 65, 192, 251, 270, 271, 279, 426, 427, 482
Cantecroix, Beatrix de Cusances, Countess de, I. 255, 256
Cantin, Mme. II. 216, 351, 352.—IV. 4
Caretti, Nicolas, I. 119, 286, 287
Carignan, M. de Bourbon-Soissons, Princess of, II. 55, 507.—III. 171.—VI. 281
— Mlle. L. P. de S. Soissons de, I. 268
— V. A. de Savoie, Prince of, I. 440, 522.—III. 270.—IV. 471.—VI. 281
Carlos, Don, VI. 356, 405, 406, 476

Carman, II. 280
Carpenter, General, IV. 77
Casau, IV. 145, 147, 152, 168
Casse, J. B., Du, II. 152.—IV. 373, 481
Cassini, V. 103
Castagnana, Marquis de, I. 469
Castel-dos-Rios, M. de Samenant, Marquis of, I. 384, 437
Castries, Abbé de, VI. 225, 334
— (son of Marquis 1663–1728), V. 410, 411, 442.—VI. 334
— J. F. de la Croix, Marquis de, I. 270.—III. 454, 479, 480.—IV. 504.—V. 91, 410, 411, 442
— M. E. de Rochechouart-Mortemart, Mme. de, I. 183, 209–211, 322.—II. 57.—IV. 29, 142.—V. 141, 410, 411, 442.—VI. 51, 52
Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II, II. 346–347
Cattinat, N., Marshal, I. 29, 33, 65, 74, 105, 133, 175, 176, 239, 479, 480, 502, 507–509, 513–515.—II. 34–36, 52, 55, 63, 65, 95, 238.—III. 22, 23, 132, 314, 315
Caudelet, Abbé de, I. 268, 269, 353.—III. 194
Caumartin, J. F. P., Abbé de, I. 112–114, 352, 445
— L. U. Lefèvre de, Marquis de, I. 213, 320, 362, 364.—III. 463.—IV. 58, 59
Cavalier, Jean, II. 184, 185
Cavoye, Louis d'Oger, Marquis de, I. 92, 93, 154, 161–163, 348.—II. 100, 101, 333, 334.—IV. 492.—V. 246, 282, 330, 410
— L. P. de Coëtlogon, Marquise de, Mme. de, wife of the Quartermaster, I. 162, 163.—II. 100
— M. de Lort de Signare, Mme. de, mother of the Quartermaster, I. 162
Caylus, Abbé de, Bishop of Auxerre, II. 188
— C. A. de Thulières de Levis, Chevalièr de, I. 214.—II. 231.—VI. 349
— M. M. le Valois de Vilette de Mursay, Mme. de, I. 347.—II. 231, 232, 249, 250, 418, 419.—III. 32, 227, 441, 505.—IV. 35, 40, 41, 47, 128, 145, 312.—V. 214, 215, 247, 300, 412.—VI. 216
Cellamare, Prince de, afterwards Duke de Giovanazzo, V. 40, 114.—VI. 60, 123, 195–199, 201, 203, 213, 228, 229, 325, 344, 345, 352, 369
Céreste, Count de, VI. 328, 347, 365, 429
Chaise, Father de la, François d'Aix, I. 7, 114, 138, 146, 149, 183, 224, 226, 230, 268, 269, 276, 278, 308–311, 321, 411, 424, 428, 435, 466.—II. 87, 126, 221, 335, 408, 500.—III. 155, 193–195, 353, 362, 507.—IV. 68, 71, 120, 271, 419
— Mme. de la, II. 408
Chalais, Blaise de Talleyrand, Prnice of, I. 271.—III. 326.—IV. 380, 381, 404, 509.—V. 42, 90, 451.—VI. 32, 348, 433
Châlons, Bishop of, *see* Vendôme; Noailles
Chamarande, J. C. Chevalier de, II. 385.—III. 459
Chamillart, E. T. le Rebours, Mme. de, I. 372, 427.—II. 91, 157, 161, 414.—III. 36, 203, 274
— Jérôme, brother of M, called Comte de, I. 373
— J. F., successively Bishop of Dôle and of Senlis, I. 372.—II. 89, 172.—IV. 489, 490
— Michel, I. xiii, xiv, 339, 370–374, 419, 421, 427, 460–463, 501–504, 506, 507, 509, 513, 532.—II. 7, 11–13, 19, 20, 27, 28, 30, 34–36, 49, 54, 85, 86, 88–92, 96, 133, 138, 139, 143, 144, 146, 147, 154, 157, 158, 161, 170–173, 188, 195, 196, 199, 208, 213, 221, 240, 244, 246, 252, 266, 283, 287, 299, 301, 304, 310–312, 321, 322, 325, 326, 337, 338, 344, 353, 355, 356, 358, 361, 364, 367, 369, 370, 380, 385, 387, 388, 398, 400, 402, 404, 407, 411, 413, 414, 418, 424–429, 431–434, 436, 445, 446, 454, 457.—III. 9, 10, 22, 23, 32, 33, 35–44, 50, 51, 63, 64, 68, 72, 74, 75, 84, 87, 95, 115, 117, 118, 128–134, 140, 142, 145–147, 150–153, 165, 173, 174, 176, 189, 191, 192, 218, 219, 226, 232–235, 273, 275, 280–286, 288–295, 297, 305, 315, 321, 322, 325, 336, 366–368, 414, 418.—IV. 10, 154, 157, 187, 193, 197, 217–219, 221, 222, 229, 230, 259, 322, 355, 393, 489, 490.—V. 24, 34, 214, 270, 304, 363, 364, 381, 442.—VI. 308, 309, 510
Chamillart, son of Michel C., *see* Cani, Marquis de
Chamilly, E. du B. de Villeflix, Mme. de, II. 96, 118, 131
— N. Bouton, Count de, Marshal, II. 95, 131, 328, 241.—III. 63
Chamlay, III. 74, 188, 192.—V. 107, 267
Champfleur, Bishop of La Rochelle, IV. 120–123, 285, 286
Chancellor, The, *see* Pontchartrain, Louis; Voysin, D. F.; Daguesseau, H. F.
Chandenier, F. de Rochechouart, Marquis de, I. 180, 181
Chapelle, La, IV. 424, 425
Chardon, Daniel, II. 210, 211
Chardon, M. Caillard, Mme. II. 210, 211
Charlemagne, I. 46
Charles, Archduke, 2nd son of the Emperor, Leopold I, afterwards Emperor Charles VI, I. 417, 418, 436.—II. 141, 172, 173, 181, 271, 288, 300, 301, 366, 375, 378, 409, 420.—III. 6, 7, 105, 168, 309, 312, 335.—IV. 74–76, 183, 214, 284, 412, 470, 471.—V. 42, 331, 436.—VI. 8, 59, 61, 190, 194, 195, 205, 211, 231, 241, 242, 263, 268, 297, 331, 368, 369, 390, 391, 405, 476
— I, King of England, I. 242.—IV. 392, 505.—VI. 67
— II, King of England, I. xi, 264, 502, 520.—II. 153, 347, 452.—IV. 392.—V. 22, 125, 126.—VI. 56
— — King of Spain, I. 168, 246, 337, 338, 384, 416–418, 436, 446–448.—II. 79, 411.—IV. 147, 412.—VI. 242, 379, 449
— IX, I. 85.—IV. 448
Charmel, L. de Ligny, Count du, I. 305, 308–310, 312, 313, 473.—II. 332–334.—IV. 303, 478, 511
Charmont, J. A. Hennequin, Seigneur de, II. 181. 227
Charnacé, J. P. de Girard, Marquis de, I. 287–289
Charolais, Mlle, de, III. 512.—IV. 376
— Count de, III. 474.—IV. 115, 376, 501, 514.—VI. 6, 87, 88, 94, 99–104, 267, 268
Charost, Armand de Béthune, Duke de, I. 169, 285, 286, 502, 503.—III. 205, 341, 343, 344.—IV. 33, 107, 111, 205–207, 282, 283, 403.—V. 37, 64, 65, 160, 182, 222, 248, 319, 372, 375, 397, 423.—VI. 201, 459, 464
— Marie Brûlat, Duchess de, III. 37.—IV. 402, 403
Chartres, Bishop of, *see* Godet
— Duke of, son of the Regent, VI. 36, 42, 304, 518–520, 524, 525
— Françoise-Marie, Duchess of, natural daughter of the King, I. 12, 16–18, 22, 24, 27, 33, 105, 108, 151, 152, 178, 183, 185, 186, 208–212, 270, 315–317, 323, 346, 489, 492, 494, 516. Afterwards Duchess of Orleans, *q.v.*
— Mlle. de, VI. 310, 324, 325
— Mlle. de, Abbess of Chelles, IV. 50, 442.—V. 151, 482, 483.—VI. 497, 525

Chartres, Philip d'Orleans, Duke of, afterwards Regent, I. 2, 12–19, 24, 26, 33, 56, 59, 62, 65, 107, 124, 125, 132, 136, 172, 186, 200, 253, 314–317, 386, 480–482, 487–492, 494, 516, 518. Afterwards, Duke of Orleans, *q.v.*
— Vidame de, afterwards Duke de Ruffec and Duke de Saint-Simon, eldest son of the author, V. 133, 231–234.—VI. 328, 335, 337, 340, 347, 359, 376, 387, 422–424, 447
— — — title of the author before succeeding to the Dukedom of Saint-Simon, I. 1, 290
Chastelet, Marquise du, IV. 492, 493
— A. C., Marquis de, I. 193
— S. Gigault de Bellefonds, Marquise de, I. 182, 193, 194, 195, 286.—IV. 323
Châteauneuf, Charles de l'Aubespine, Marquis of, I. 9, 10, 41, 48, 174, 244, 421, 422, 532.—II. 52, 53
— F. de Castagner, Abbé de, I, 234, 237.—III. 170
Châteaurenaud, F. L. Rousselet, Marquis de, Marshal, II. 95, 97, 99–101, 111, 204, 238, 241.—IV. 411
Châteauthiers, Anne de Foudras, Mme. de, I. 18.—III. 29, 30
Châtel, Jean, III. 196
Châtillon, E. A. de Montmorency-Boutteville, Maréchale de, I. 81, 151
— V. 483, 489, 491
— G. de Coligny Châtillon, Marshal de, I. 81
— Marie-Anne, Duchesse of, I. 442, 443.—II. 246.—III. 106.—IV. 27
Chatre, Edmé de, La, II. 264.—III. 192, 193
Châtres, Abbé de la, I. 269, 353
Chaulieu, G. A. de, Abbé de, I. 97, 351.—II. 285.—III. 123
Chaulnes, C. d'Albert d'Ailly, Duke de, I. 33, 90, 91. 94, 97, 101–103, 120, 123, 124, 171, 202–205, 230, 294, 335, 366, 441.—II. 166, 319.—III. 82, 445
— d'Albert, Duke de, IV. 287–289.—V. 375, 409.—VI. 106, 133, 134
— E. le Féron, Duchess de, I. 124, 294, 335.—II. 421, 422.—III. 82
Chaulny, I. 64
Chausseraye, Mlle. de, III. 413, 414, 422, 424.—V. 438–442
Chauvalon, Marquis de, I. 62
Chauvelin, V. 232–234
Chauvier, Brother, I. 311, 312
Chavagnac, H. L. de, II. 360
Chavigny, D. F. de Bouthillier, Abbé de, afterwards Bishop of Troyes, I. 229, 230, 309, 445.—V. 424, 455, 456, 471.—VI. 54, 142–144, 146, 187
— L. B. Count de, I. 42–44, 229
— (Chavignard), called Abbé de, III. 446, 447
— (Chavignard), called Chevalier de, III. 446, 447.—VI. 402–406, 426, 436, 442
Cheladet, General, III. 148
Chelles, Abbess of, *see* Chartres, Mlle. de
Chemerault, J. de Barbesière, Count de, II. 284.—III. 343, 344
Chétardie, Father, La, rector of St. Sulpice, III. 355.—IV. 203, 452
Cheverny, Countess de, IV. 41, 43.—VI. 491
— L. de Clermont-Monglat, Count de, I. 380–383.—II. 40.—III. 103, 187, 372, 496, 497.—IV. 210, 329, 331.—V. 111, 260
Chevigny, N. G. de, Father, I. 261
Chevilly, IV. 64
Chevreuse, C. H. d'Albert, Duke de, I. xiii, 84, 87, 90, 95, 120, 124, 128, 135, 143–145, 154, 171, 182, 205, 221–223, 227, 262, 274, 275, 278, 281, 282, 285, 291, 294, 339, 371, 389, 430, 439, 475, 502, 503, 508, 534.—II. 6, 7, 12, 106, 107, 138, 139, 162, 163, 166, 173, 203, 263, 301, 314–316, 432, 445.—III. 36, 37–39, 41, 48–50, 72, 86, 118, 125, 126, 156, 196, 197, 200, 203, 205, 206, 210, 214, 224, 225, 231, 236, 267, 270, 285, 292, 296, 297, 299–306, 316, 361, 442, 443, 447, 448, 496, 497, 503, 505, 507.—IV. 68, 71, 157, 184, 188, 190, 196, 197, 200, 204,–208, 226, 227, 231, 238, 240, 245, 258–260, 266, 268, 269, 271, 278, 279, 283, 286–288, 294, 302, 331, 332, 335, 338, 340, 349, 353, 354, 362, 375, 393–400, 420, 472, 473.—V. 18, 21, 26–31, 34, 36, 82, 169
— Marie de Rohan, Duchess de, I. 41, 120, 124, 128, 182, 251, 262, 282, 283, 285, 439, 534.—II. 21, 151, 203.—III. 37, 203, 205, 206, 299, 300, 302, 448.—IV. 196, 204–207, 332, 394, 395, 400, 401, 411, 478.—V. 28, 32, 33, 308.—VI. 189
— Mlle. M. F. d'A. de Luynes de, I. 251, 262, Afterwards Mme. de Lévi, *q.v.*
Chimay, C. L. A., Prince of, I. 456.—II. 447.—VI. 448, 449
Chirac, Physician to the Duke of Orleans, III. 495.—V. 77, 357.—VI. 49–51, 226, 401, 402, 498
Choin, Mlle. M. E. Joly d', I. 108–111, 151, 505.—II. 105, 163, 327, 448–450, 467, 469.—III. 36, 68, 84, 85, 117, 135, 182, 218, 281–283, 295, 296, 315, 318, 440, 441, 494, 505.—IV. 9–17, 19, 25, 127, 129, 145, 148–150, 153–156, 167, 168, 186, 188, 192, 195, 323, 345
Choiseul, A. de, Duke de and Marshal, I. 30, 31, 172, 174, 175, 181, 196, 239, 294.—II. 18, 62, 65, 67, 95, 295, 296.—III. 44, 243.—IV. 117, 118
— Claude, Count de, I. 29
— L. G. de la Vallière, Duchess of, I. 30, 294
Choisy, F. T., Abbé de, III. 98
— J. O. H. de Bellisbat, Mme. de, I. 270.—II. 347
Christina, Queen of Sweden, IV. 514
Churchill, Arabella, II. 43, 346
Cilly, C. du Fay d'Athies, Marquis de, II. 196, 454, 458.—VI. 218
Claude, M. Minister of Charenton, II. 72
Clefmont, IV. 492, 493
Clement VIII, Pope, III. 358
— IX, Pope, III. 82, 360, 362–364.—IV. 242
— X, Pope, I. 431.—III. 82.—V. 54
— XI, Pope, I. 459.—II. 278, 287, 288, 324, 325.—III. 139–141, 168, 241, 242, 312, 362, 387.—IV. 66, 91, 92, 347, 382, 412, 453–455, 460–462, 464, 467, 473.—V. 43, 44, 96, 97, 354, 359, 408, 456, 472, 473, 475, 478, 479.—VI. 53, 54, 190, 241, 263, 308, 378, 405, 425
Clérembault, L. F. Bouthillier, Maréchale de, I. 519.—II. 30–32.—III. 166.—VI. 480
— P. de Clérembault de Palluan, Marquis de, I. 169.—II. 191, 192.—III. 61
Clermont, Bishop of, IV. 304, *see also* Entragues, Abbé d'
— de, V. 483, 485, 489
— Louis de Bourbon-Condé, Connt de, III. 218, 254
— Mme. de, V. 104
— F. A. de, I. 109–111.—III. 151.—IV. 155
Clermont-Chaste, L. de, Bishop of Laon, afterwards Archbishop of Cambrai, I. 501.—II. 163.—IV. 154, 155.—V. 371, 375.—VI 160, 496
Clermont-Tonnerre, F. de, Count de, afterwards Duke de Piney, I. 80, 82, 115
— — François de, Bishop of Noyon, I. 66, 111–115, 152, 364, 470

Coësquen, M. A., Count de, I. 10, 11, 207.—III. 159.—V. 224
— M. G. de Rohan-Chabot, Countess de, I, 292
Coëtlogon, A. E., Count de, I. 64
— L. P., Mlle. de, afterwards Mme. de Cavoye, *q.v.*
Coettenfao, V. 104–106
— Bishop of Avranches, V. 104, 105
— Mme. de, V. 104
Cœuvres, Marshal de, *see* Estrées, Count d'
Coigny, F. de Franquetot, Marquis, afterwards Duke de, I. 395.—II. 143, 144, 221.—V. 445–447.—VI. 232
— M. F. de Mattignon, Countess de, II. 143.—V. 445–447,.—VI. 232
Coislin, Armand da Cambout, Duke de, I. 339–341, 465.—II. 57–61, 488.—III. 452, 475–477.—IV. 403
— C. C. du Cambout, Chevalier de, I. 339–341, 348
— H. C. du Cambout, Abbé de, Bishop of Metz, and Cardinal, I. 231, 232, 432, 484.—II. 58, 59, 61, 304, 305, 327, 330, 480.—III. 267, 451, 477–482.—IV. 164, 376, 427, 436.—V. 334, 397.—VI. 167
— P. du Cambout de, Cardinal, I. 147, 149, 167, 230–232, 253, 339–340, 341. 432, 446, 484.—II. 57, 61, 304, 305, 327–330
Colandre, II. 30
Colbert, Archbishop of Rouen, III. 25, 80
— J. B., I. x, 50, 126, 128, 178, 341, 365, 366, 377–379, 381, 419, 420, 441.—II. 96, 107, 138, 140, 356, 421, 433, 491.—III. 270.—IV. 229, 238, 247, 395, 396.—V. 22, 255, 256, 264, 502
Coligny, G. A., Marquis de, I. 155
Cologne, Elector of, II. 361, 406, 407, 414.—IV. 99
Colonna, M. Mancini, Mme. de, II. 285, 446.—IV. 506
Combalet, M. M. de Wignerod, Mme. de, afterwards Duchess d'Aiguillon, II. 235, 236
Commercy, Mlle., *see* Princess d'Espinois
— C. F. de Lorraine-Elbœuf, Prince of, I. 256, 507, 508.—II. 51, 52
Compiègne, review at, I. 291, 294–302
Condé, Anne of Bavaria, Princess of, wife of Henri Jules, 5th Prince, "Madame la Princesse," I. 28, 30, 178, 442.—II. 50, 424, 487, 488, 496.—III. 19, 217, 247, 250, 251, 418, 435, 451, 453, 474.—IV. 360, 442–445.—V. 74, 75.—VI. 89, 212, 482
— Anne Victoire, Mlle. de, I. 442.—III, 247, 252
— C. M. de Montmorency, Princess of, wife of Henri, 3rd Prince, "Madame la Princesse," I. 45.—II. 271
— Henri de Bourbon, 2nd Prince of, I. 12
— — — 3rd Prince of, I. 12, 13, 35, 40–43, 45.—III. 432
— Henri-Jules de Bourbon, 5th Prince de, "M. le Prince," I. 12, 13, 20, 26, 28, 31, 54, 56, 58, 73, 81, 83, 95, 155, 208, 236, 238, 243, 267, 399, 403, 405, 407, 442–444, 464, 465, 482, 497, 502.—II. 50, 56, 60, 71, 73, 74, 124, 125, 206, 207, 222, 246, 258, 271, 356, 376, 383, 416, 457, 458, 485–489, 508, 509.—III. 215, 217, 245–255, 268, 291, 349, 418, 433, 434, 463, 464, 473, 503, 504.—IV. 98, 114–117, 189, 190, 442, 473, 489.—V. 74, 261, 330.—VI. 89
— Louis de Bourbon, 1st Prince of, I. 12.—III. 347
— — — 4th Prince of, "the Great," I. 13, 40, 42, 45, 46, 49, 103, 442.—II. 56, 60, 451, 452, 458, 486, 508.—III. 214, 221, 249.—IV. 506
Conde, Louis, Henri de Bourbon, 6th Prince of, *see* Bourbon, L. H., Duke of
— — Françoise, Princess of Condé, *see* Bourbon, L. F. Duchess of
— Mlle. de Maillé-Brézé, Princess of, wife of 4th Prince, Mme. "la Princesse," I. 50
Conflans, Bailli de, V. 344.—VI. 42
— A. P. de, Marquis de, I. 212.—II. 84
— Mme. de, VI. 491, 492
— P. A., Chevalier de, I. 212
Contades, G. J. de, II. 375.—V. 192, 393.—VI. 133, 134
Contencin, Father, V. 57
Conti, Cardinal, afterwards Pope, VI. 308, 312
— F. L. de Bourbon, Prince of, I. 20, 33, 53, 54, 56–59, 62, 66, 74, 84, 109, 117, 118, 132, 133, 136, 153, 156, 193, 206, 207, 233–239, 263, 276, 289, 323, 337, 353, 430, 482, 497.—II. 27, 45, 60, 102, 165, 169, 196, 202, 258, 263, 370, 379, 389, 449, 457, 458, 469, 470, 491, 504, 508–511.—III. 26, 55, 68, 139–141, 155, 177, 187, 193, 213–223, 243, 252, 268, 454.—IV. 10, 95, 147, 154, 193, 210, 422, 442, 506, 508
— Louis Arnaud de Bourbon, Prince of, I. 12, 13.—II. 484.—III. 26.—IV. 596
— Mlle. de, IV. 442–445
— Marie-Anne, Princess of, natural daughter of the King, I. 12, 104, 105, 108–111, 151, 152, 178, 201, 235, 236, 239, 242, 293, 300, 315, 361, 505.—II. 341, 383, 389, 448, 467, 501.—III, 14, 19, 36, 135, 137, 152, 153, 155, 218, 252, 437, 452, 459, 462, 474.—IV. 60, 86–89, 98, 115, 127, 129, 132–135, 145, 154, 155, 157, 180, 186, 187, 256, 267, 324, 362, 437.—VI. 209, 248, 482, 483, 525
— Marie Thérèse de Bourbon-Condé, Princess of, I. 178, 442.—II. 2, 274, 507.—III. 19, 59, 60, 135, 137, 155, 184, 218, 220, 252, 253, 261, 435.—IV. 7, 12, 26, 180, 188, 192, 361, 442, 445, 446
— Prince of, III. 217, 221–223, 253, 437.—IV. 98, 376, 442–446, 518, 529.—V. 412.—VI. 22, 75, 138, 141–143, 146, 149, 153, 159, 160, 162, 167, 208, 209, 249, 250, 260, 267, 469, 524
Cordoba, Don Gonsalvo de, VI. 423
Cornuël, Mme. I. 104
Cosnac, Daniel de, Archbishop of Aix, I. 482.—II. 181, 243, 246, 267, 276.—III. 26
— Mlle. M. A. de, I. 125
Cossé, *see* Brisnac, Duke de, nephew of the author
Coulanges, V. 408, 409
Cour-des-Chiens, La, III 235
Courcillon, P E., Marquis de, II. 412, 413.—III. 88, 89, 344, 449
Courson, Intendant at Rouen and after at Orleans, III. 327.—V. 516, 518, 519
Court, Dom Jacques, I. 311
Courtebonne, II. 252
Courtenay, L. C., Prince de, I. 72, 73.—V. 356
Courtenvaux, M. F. le Tellier, Marquis de, II. 296–298.—III. 117.—V. 115, 276
— Mme., II. 97.—IV. 403
Courtin, Honoré, Intendant of Picardy, I. 202, 205, 362, 363.—II. 6, 153, 154.—III. 209
Couronges, C. F. de Stainville, Count de, I. 314, 316
Crécy, L. V., Count de, I. 120, 202, 239
Creil, C. A. de Chemand, Mme. de, II. 208
Crenai, Brigadier, I. 6
Crenan, Colonel, I. 300.—II. 22–26
Créquy, Maréchale de, I. 268, 269.—IV. 307
— François, Marshal de, I. 38, 105, 106, 305.—II. 51, 56, 59, 103, 140, 250.—IV. 279.—V. 255.—VI. 208

Créquy, F. J., Marquis de, I. 38, 105, 106, 305.—II. 51, 56, 59, 103.—IV. 279.—V. 23
— Marquise de, III. 451
Croissy, C. Collert, Marquis de, I. 178, 179, 205, 322, 379, 380.—III. 208.—V. 36
Crosat Antoine, afterwards Marquise du Châtel, I. 351, 352.—II. 438.—III. 74, 124, 128, 260
Cujavie, Stanislaus Dombski, Bishop of, I. 235, 237
Cybo, Alderan, Cardinal, I. 414, 415, 424

Dagreda, Marie, I. 384
Daguesseau, H. F., advocate-general, afterwards Chancellor, I. 107, 169–172, 362, 363.—II. 250, 445.—IV. 66, 84, 107.—V. 9–11, 117, 184, 185, 345, 354, 456–462.—VI. 1, 2, 4, 5, 14–16, 22, 23, 29, 30, 33–35, 270, 271, 278, 281, 426, 427, 431, 445–447
Damon, Anne Aubourg, Mme., I. 127
Dampierre, Chevalier de, V. 351
Dangeau, P. de Courcillon, Marquis de, I. 112, 182, 188, 412, 476.—II. 182, 217, 319, 320, 326, 331, 366.—III. 88, 89, 344, 449.—IV. 317, 404, 410.—V. 48, 49, 330, 453.—VI. 282–288
— Sophie Marie of Bavaria, Mme. de, I. 182, 189, 190.—II. 157, 412.—III. 58, 132, 201, 449.—IV. 145, 312, 404, 409, 410.—V. 84, 214, 215.—VI. 57, 216, 284, 285
Daniel, Father, IV. 438, 439
Darmstadt, G. de Hesse-, Prince of, I. 245, 246, 447
Daun, Count, VI. 62
Dauphin, The, *see* Louis, Dauphin of France; Burgundy; Duke of Brittany Louis, Duke of; Anjou, Louis, Duke of
Dauphiness, The, Marie-Anne-Christine-Victoire of Bavaria, Madame la Dauphine. I. 22, 27, 70, 182, 185, 187, 189, 193, 277, 329, 518.—II. 155, 166, 167, 232.—III. 18, 19, 83.—IV. 71, 282, 351, 492.—V. 298.—VI. 284. *See also* Burgundy, Duchess of
Deffand, Marie de Vichy-Chambord, Marquise du, I. xvi
Delphini, M. D., Cardinal, I. 394, 398
Denmark, Charlotte Amelia, Queen of, I. 219
— Christian V, King of, I. 220
Denonvile, P. R. de Brisay, Count de, II. 193, 195, 199, 236
Denonville, IV. 72
Deschamps, Father, III. 194
Desgranges, M. A., I. 181, 317, 443.—III. 13, 220.—VI. 135, 146, 152, 154, 158
Desmarets, Mme., I. 421.—III. 90, 511.—IV. 491
— N., I. 419–421.—II. 138, 139, 154, 353, 354, 433.—III. 35, 38, 39, 41–44, 75, 76, 79, 132, 171, 172, 183, 234, 241, 273, 275, 285, 296, 300, 316, 414, 438.—IV. 54, 81–84, 107, 196–198, 213, 229, 234, 294, 310, 491.—V. 35, 36, 161, 180, 184, 226, 248, 333, 348, 352, 355, 399–402, 430.—VI. 309
Despréaux, *see* Boileau-Despréaux
Destruches, Philippe, I. 254
Dijon, Parliament of, I. 291, 376
Dillon, General, II. 27.—VI. 515
Dippy, V. 93
Disimieu, II. 485, 486
Dodart, Physician to Louis XV, VI. 50
Dôle, Bishop of, *see* Chamillart
Dombes, Prince de, III. 471.—IV. 265, 266, 360, 515.—V. 151.—VI. 6
Domingue, IV. 282
Dongois, II. 15
Donzi, M., II. 447, 448
Doubelt, Brothers, II. 443
Doucin, Father, V. 172, 397
Douglas, Colonel, V. 393–395
Doyen, M., I. 248
Dran, Le, Surgeon, II. 171
Dreux, C. A., Mme. I. 373.—III. 85, 118, 131, 274
— Thomas, called Marquis de, I. 373, 532.—II. 16, 385.—III. 220.—IV. 61, 164, 428, 501.—V. 338, 367, 368
Dromesnil, Abbé de, afterwards successively Bishop of Autun and Verdun. IV. 70
Dubois, Abbé, Guillaume, Tutor to the Duke of Chartres, afterwards Cardinal and Archbishop of Cambrai, I. xv. 14, 15.—II. 95, 254.—III. 46, 47, 308, 447.—V. 127–131, 338, 347, 356, 391, 406–408, 421, 430, 436, 462, 466, 467, 471, 515.—VI. 8, 9, 21, 30, 59, 70, 71, 73, 76, 96, 107, 122, 124, 129, 172, 194, 196–201, 205–208, 219, 228, 229, 231, 233–237, 240, 251, 252, 254, 258–262, 265, 269, 271, 279, 281, 282, 289, 296–299, 301–303, 305–315, 319–322, 324–334, 336, 340, 348, 354, 355, 357–359, 367, 369–373, 387, 401–407, 425–429, 431, 435–438, 441, 442, 444–448, 450–458, 460, 462, 463, 466–478, 481, 482, 484–496, 522
Duchesne, *Valet-de-chambre* to the Duke of Burgundy, IV. 246, 249, 330, 331, 353
Dumont, H. de Gaureaul, Seigneur, II. 349, 448.—III. 281, 306.—IV. 86–91, 99, 145, 156, 168, 194
— advocate, I. 169, 170
Duquesne, II. 420
Duras, A. V. de Bournonville, Duchess of, II. 303.—V. 233
— J. B. de Durfort, 2nd Duke de, II. 303
— J. H. de Durfort, Marshal de, I. 123, 126, 130, 154, 155, 217, 218, 220, 261, 278, 291, 358, 359, 360, 382, 465, 509.—II. 16, 17, 38, 43, 74, 76, 95, 140, 207, 221–226, 263, 303.—III. 57, 221, 269.—IV. 413, 472.—VI. 443
— M. F. de Levis, Maréchale de, I. 154, 173, 174, 190, 360.—II. 62, 207, 208, 222, 223, 325.—III. 15–18
Durtal, Count de, IV. 407–409

Echelle, C. M. de L', Gentleman-in-waiting to the Duke of Burgundy, I. 145
Effiat, Abbé d', I. 320.—IV. 485
— A. Coiffier, Marquis d', I. 15, 520, 521.—II. 241.—III. 371.—IV. 367–370.—V. 107–109, 193, 373, 400, 422, 429, 453, 463, 471, 482, 486, 488, 491, 505.—VI. 26, 38, 65, 109, 139, 140, 143, 144, 148, 150, 152, 154, 155
Egmont, Count d', III. 269
— M. A. de Cosnac, Countess d', II. 246
Elbœuf, Dowager-Duchess of, I. 317.—III. 89
— F. de Montault, Duchess d', II. 205, 206, 209.—III. 328–330.—IV. 48, 94.—VI. 286
— Henri de Lorraine, Duke d', I., 97, 98, 100, 139, 315–318, 323, 401.—II. 29, 205, 283, 480.—IV. 472.—VI. 12–14
— Marquis d', I. 13
— Prince de, II. 283
— S. H. de Lorraine, Mlle. d', afterwards Duchess of Mantua, II. 205, 207, 209, 210.—III. 328–331, 419.—IV. 94.—VI. 286
Enclos, Ninon, Mlle. de l', II. 294–296
Enghien, Duke d', III. 221, 222, 243, 433. For later references, *see* Bourbon, Duke of
— M. A., Mlle. d', afterwards Mme. de Vendôme, I. 442, 443.—III. 247.—III. 473, 474
Entragues, Abbé d', Bishop of Clermont, V. 408
— Abbé d', VI. 248, 249
— H. de Montvallet, Chevalier de, II. 23, 25, 347
Erba, Benedict, Archbishop of Milan, IV. 412

Escalona, J. M. Fernandez d'Acuña, Duke of, II. 40
Esclainvilliers, C. T. de, Colonel, I. 107
Espinois, A. G. de Melun, Prince d', I. 292.—II. 211, 212, 469.—V. 364
— J. P., Princess d', I. 207, 256, 292, 293, 504, 505.—II. 11, 205, 237, 462, 464–467.—III. 59, 61, 68, 85, 118, 152, 204, 205.—IV. 48, 127, 129, 149, 153, 154, 158, 166, 168, 189, 190, 359, 366.—V. 2, 364–366.—VI. 38. 52
— L. A. de Béthune, Princess d', the elder, I. 291–293
Estaing, F. Count, d', II. 391, 393, 395
Estang, l', Lieutenant of Dutch Guards, I. 140
Estrades, Abbé de, IV. 101
— VI. 6
Estrées, César, Cardinal d', I. 152, 263, 268, 446, 522.—II. 97, 112.—136–138, 148, 149, 175, 176, 277, 446, 492.—III. 214, 360, 362.—IV. 226, 285.—V. 43, 51–57
— Jean, Duke d' Marshal, I. 169, 170, 294, 423.—II. 95, 117, 314, 446, 491, 492
— — Abbé d', afterwards Archbishop of Cambrai, II. 137, 148, 149, 174–178, 237, 492.—III. 312.—IV. 503.—V. 160, 408.—VI. 45, 330
— Gabrielle d', V. 52, 53
— L. F., d'Ayen, Countess d', Maréchale de Cœuvres, I. 363.—II. 215, 296, 298, 351, 498–500.—VI. 284
— M. M. Morin, Maréchale d', I. 189, 423.—II. 156, 447.—III. 36, 181.—IV. 188, 502, 503.—V. 110.—VI. 284
— V. M. Count d', afterwards Marshal de Cœuvres and Duke D'Estrées, I. 263, 530.—II. 34, 40, 95–99, 109, 147, 182, 204, 219, 230, 241, 290, 346, 360, 371, 503.—III. 140.—IV. 226, 232, 440, 441.—V. 36, 51, 56, 57, 156, 160, 355, 358, 360–362, 377, 392, 515, 520, 521.—VI. 12, 38, 48, 113, 143, 146, 149, 159, 322
Eu, Count d', III. 471.—IV. 406, 420.—V. 428, 429
Eugène, Prince of Savoy, *see* Savoy, Prince Eugène of
Evreux, H. L. de la Tour d'Auvergne, Count d', I, 403,—II. 109, 110, 438.—III. 24, 34, 35, 112, 119, 122, 124, 128, 231, 244.—V. 445

Fabert, Abraham, Marshal, II. 238
Fabroni, Cardinal, IV. 455, 460, 461.—V. 99
Fagon (Consciller d'État), VI. 72–74, 76, 96, 107, 124, 129
— G. C., First Physician to the King, I. 68–70, 110, 461, 474–477, 491, 532, 533.—II. 37, 118, 158, 171, 218, 279, 389, 445.—III. 61, 77, 78, 198, 199, 275.—IV. 95, 126, 130, 131, 133, 134, 138, 272, 284, 290, 357, 358, 361, 364, 371, 372, 414, 495.—V. 3, 49, 50, 212–215, 240, 242, 247, 307, 319.—VI. 45
Falari, Mme., VI. 517
Fanaro, III. 479, 480
Fargues, Balthazar de, II. 291–293
Favancourt, VI. 201, 202
Félix, C. F. Tarsy, commonly called First Surgeon, I. 477, 478—II. 58, 118, 120
Fénelon, Francois de Selignac, de la, Mothe de, Abbé, afterwards Archbishop of Cambrai, I. 77, 113, 141–145, 157–160, 220–228, 271, 273, 278–286, 291, 336, 343–345, 351, 356, 357, 384, 423, 425, 431, 473, 474, 502.—II. 42, 111, 151, 225, 414.—III. 38, 98, 100, 108, 127, 194, 196, 197, 214, 296, 303, 305, 316, 448, 507.—IV. 71, 190, 194, 199, 209, 226, 227, 229, 230, 260, 266, 270, 283, 335, 338, 362, 396, 434, 459, 463.—V. 24–27, 77–84, 96, 298, 299, 408
Ferdinand, Don, VI. 356
Fère, La, VI. 460, 496, 497
Ferrant, Captain, V. 396
Ferriers, Ambassador from Savoy, I. 296
Ferté, A. J. de Sanneterre, Chevalier de la, II. 127
— H. F. de Sanneterre, Duke de La, I, 169, 172.—II. 127.—IV. 61
— M. J. G. A., Duchess de la, I. 33, 360.—II. 442, 443.—III. 424.—IV. 26, 350.—VI. 315
Fervaques, A. N. de Bouillon, Marquis de, I. 276, 277
Feuillade, Georges d'Aubusson de, Bishop of Metz, I. 174, 227.—VI. 330
— Duchess de la, I. 243.—II. 89, 156.—III. 167.—V. 442
— Louis d'Aubusson, Duke de la, I. 61, 174, 243, 244, 287, 362, 531, 532.—II. 30, 75, 88, 89, 107, 146, 147, 185, 186, 213, 252, 299, 300, 361, 362, 374, 384–386, 389–395, 397–400, 403–405, 504.—III. 40, 145, 202, 204, 232, 281, 285, 289, 479, 480.—IV. 193, 371.—V. 227, 228, 256, 260, 374, 398, 399.—VI. 312, 340
Feuillée, P. F. du Ban Count de la, I. 106
Feuquières, A. de Pas, Marquis de, I. 57, 156.—II. 29, 30.—IV. 100
Feversham, L. de Durport, Earl of, I. 346.—II. 43, 347
Fiesque, G. M. J. d'Harcourt, Countess de, I. 270, 375, 376.—VI. 514
— J. L. Marie, Count de, I. 406, 520, 531.—II. 116, 276.—III. 168, 169, 453
Fieubet, II. 154, 155
Finot, III. 250
First Equerry, *see* Beringhen, M. de Baradas
Fléchier, Bishop of Nîmes, III. 450.—IV. 150.—V. 85
Flers, M. de, II. 349
Fleuri, Joli de, I. 521.—IV. 430.—V. 344, 345, 354
Fleurian, T. C., Father, I. 501
Fleury, A. H. de, Abbé, afterwards Bishop of Fréjus, Archbishop of Toulouse, and Cardinal, I. 321–323.—II. 197, 198.—III. 3–7, 9, 220, 336, 354.—IV. 85, 335.—V. 84–86, 117, 315, 468, 515, 516.—VI. 238–240, 243–245, 312, 313, 321–324, 372, 440, 447, 459, 460, 463–466, 494, 498, 499, 517, 518, 521, 522
Florensac, M. de Sanneterre de Lestrange, Marquise de, II. 273
Flotte, III. 310–312, 314.—V. 99, 100
Foix, H. F., Duke de, I. 181.—III. 476.—IV. 477, 478
— M. C. de Roquelaure, Duchess de, I. 174.—III. 96, 450
— Mlle. de, II. 376
Fontaine, Jean de La, I. 131
— Mme. La, V. 399–401
Fontainemartel, A. M., Countess de, I. 23.—II. 46, 47, 378.—IV. 17, 18
— Henri-Martel, Count de, I. 20, 23, 64.—II. 378
Fontanieu, VI. 76–79, 91, 104, 107, 137
— Mme. VI. 78
Fontenille, VI. 207
Fontenilles, Mme. de, IV. 308.—V. 11.—VI. 289, 514
Fontevrault, M. M. G. de Rochechouart, Abbess of, II. 189, 190
Fontpertuis, L. A. Angran, Viscount de, III. 47
Forbin, Claude, Chevalier, III. 51, 53
Force, Duchess de la, I. 349
— J. N. de Caumont, Duke de la, I. 90, 100, 248, 249.—III. 13.—V. 71–74, 222, 341–344, 375, 422, 423, 505.—VI. 67, 72, 79, 96–98, 100, 107, 123–126, 129, 143, 149, 152, 153, 159, 191, 193, 270, 271, 279, 500

Force, Mlle. de la, afterwards Countess de Roure, I. 105, 106
Forgatz, Count, II. 271
Fouquet, N., II. 125, 140, 262, 264.—III. 80, 280.—V. 22.—VI. 507
Fourcy, Henri, M. de, I. 362.—III. 196
Fourilles, Abbé de, V. 457
Frederick Augustus, King of Poland, I. 263, 290.—II. 188
Fréjus, Bishop of, *see* Fleury, Abbé
Frémont, G. Danon, Mme., I. 127, 130
— N., I. 126, 196
Freselière, F., Marquis de la, II. 38
Frette, La, III. 81, 82.—V. 19
Fromenteau, *see* Vauguyon, Count de la
Fronsac, Duke de, IV. 112, 113, 501
Frontenac, A. de la Grange Trainon, Mme. de, I. 270, 347.—II. 417
— Louis de Bouade, Count de, I. 346, 347
Froulay, Louis, Count de, I. 163
Furstemberg, G. E., Prince de and Cardinal, Bishop of Strasbourg, I. 148, 152, 189, 411, 413, 500, 501.—II. 172, 176
— Marie de Ligny, Princess of, I. 229, 411, 412, 415

Gacé, C. A. de Gayon, Count de, afterwards Marshal de Mattignon, III. 51, 54.—V. 412
Gaillard, H., Father, I. 147, 225.—V. 82
Galway, Earl of, *see* Ruvigny, H. de Marsac, Marquis de
Gamaches, C. J. B., Marquis de, I. 380, 382.—II. 40, 41.—III. 71, 130, 142, 148, 149, 182, 183.—IV. 329
— M. A. de Lomávie-Baronne, Mme. de, II. 232
Gange, Mme. de, II. 126
Gap, Bishop of, *see* Berger de Malissoles
Garde, La, V. 399, 401
Gassion, Jean, Count de, II. 365
Gendre, Le, Intendant of Montaubon, II. 430, 500
George I, Elector of Hanover, afterwards King of England, I. 123.—II. 409.—V, 3, 388, 389, 391, 436, 447, 448, 465, 466, 506, 507, 515.—VI. 59–62, 190, 241, 298
— Prince of Denmark and Consort of Queen Anne of England, II. 38
Gerrault, A. A. de, I. 353
Gervaise, Dom François, I. 306–314
Gesvres, B. F. Potier, Marquis de, I. 289, 321, 388, 389, 490.—II. 95. Afterwards Tresmes, Duke of, *q.v.*
— Leon Potier de, Abbé de, and Bishop of Bourges, I. 391, 392
— Louis Potier, Duke de, I. 103, 168, 169, 355, 361, 386–392.—II. 61, 94, 95, 233, 250.—IV. 382.—VI. 504
— M. F. da V. de F. Mareuil, Duchess de, II. 78
Giovannazzo, Duke of, V. 92
— Duke de, *see* Cellamare, Prince de
Girardin, Captain, V. 396
Giron, Don Gaspard, VI. 344, 348, 349, 352, 354, 355, 360–362, 417
Giudice, Cardinal del, IV. 485, 486, 494, 504, 509.—V. 39, 40, 92, 99, 120
Gloucester, William, Duke of, I. 434, 436
Godet des Marais, Paul, Bishop of Chartres. I. 157–160, 221, 224, 226, 227, 259, 278, 280, 305, 310, 351, 427–429, 471.—II. 86, 87, 330, 445.—III. 98, 172, 196, 197, 291, 319, 352–355, 361.—IV. 241, 416.—V. 81, 299.—VI. 190, 216
Godolphin, Sidney Godolphin, Earl of, IV. 393.—V. 3
Goesbriant, IV. 64, 98
Gondrin, L. de P. d'Antin, Marquis de, afterwards Countess de Toulouse, II. 415.—IV. 108, 109, 313.—VI. 483
— Marquise de, III. 326.—VI. 525
Gourgues, Mlle. de, V. 365, 366
Gourville, J. H., II. 124
Grammont, Marshal de, III. 346, 374.—VI. 501, 507
Grammont, A. C., Duke de, I. 297, 370, 466.—II. 70, 116, 178–180, 186, 187, 243, 255, 256, 260, 268, 269, 274.—III. 276–278, 333.—V. 462
— Duchess de, III. 276–278
— Elizabeth Hamilton, Countess de, I. 355–357.—II. 21, 120, 121, 416, 417.—III. 83
— Maréchal and Maréchale de, *see* Guiche, Duke and Duchess de
— Philibert, Count de, I. 7, 356.—II. 116, 120, 415–417.—V. 23.—VI. 512
Grancey, Abbé, II. 400
Grand Equerry, The, *see* Armagnac, Count d'; Saint-Simon, Claude, Duke de
Grand Prior, The, *see* Vendôme, P.
— Provost, *see* Montsoreaux, Count de
Grande, Mademoiselle la, daughter of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, *see* Montpensier, Mlle. de
— — historical explanation of the title, III. 256
Grandpré, L.-J. de Joyeuse, Abbé de, II. 212
Grandvilliers, A. de Verny, Seigneur de, I. 59
Grange, La, II. 276
Griffin, Edward, Lord, III. 52, 53
Grignan, Chevalier de, II. 254
— Count de, II. 220
— Countess de, I. 166.—II. 220, 274
— A. P. A. de Montail, Marquis de, I. 166.—II. 220, 254.—IV. 435
Grimaldi, Antoine, afterwards Marquis de Cernay, III. 119, 121
Grimaldo, Marquis de, VI. 340–342, 345–348, 352, 354, 357, 358, 360, 363–367, 373, 379, 381, 382, 387, 388, 396, 403–410, 428–430, 435, 439
Gualterio, P. A., Papal Nuncio and Cardinal, I. 398, 451.—II. 279, 286–288, 320, 327.—IV. 112, 439, 440
Guerchois, Pierre le, II. 284, 308, 312, 394, 396.—III. 290, 339, 340
Guesclairs, de, VI. 20
Guet, J. J., I. 472, 473
Guetem, Pierre, II. 436, 437
Guiche, Duchess de, II. 155, 225, 226.—III 43, 58, 163.—V. 180, 232–255
— Duke de, III. 448.—IV. 55.—V. 160, 192, 231, 338.—VI. 98, 99, 142, 147, 153, 159, 518, 520
— Antoine de Grammont, Duke de, I. 466.—II. 178, 225, 226, 365, 375.—III. 60, 448
— Arnaud de Grammont, Count de, I. 183,—II. 290.—III. 170, 264.—VI. 501
— M. C. de Noailles, Countess de, I. 145, afterwards Duchess du Lude, *q.v.*
Guilleragues, Mme. de, I. 191
— M. de, I. 191
Guiscard, Louis, Count de, I. 10, 58, 135, 139, 152, 407, 408.—II. 365
Guise, Claude de Lorraine, 1st Duke of, I. 13
— Elisabeth d'Orleans, Duchess of, I. 264.—VI. 318
— Louis-Joseph de Lorraine, 6th Duke of, I. 164, 165.—IV. 394
Guyet, F. Sieur de la Faye, II. 188
Guyon, J. M., Mme. I. 143–145, 158–160, 220, 221, 225, 226, 228, 282, 283, 291, 472, 473.—II. 113, 151, 225.—IV. 205, 227, 283, 395, 396.—V. 24, 30, 83, 299

Halde, Father du, V. 57

Haligre, President, VI. 158
Hamilton, Anthony, Count, II. 120, 415.—III. 51, 53
— James Douglas, Duke of, III. 51, 53, 55.—IV. 392, 393
— William Douglas, Earl of Selkirk and Duke of, IV. 392
Hanover, Bénédicte - Henriette - Philippe, Duchess of, I. 28, 350, 517
— Ernest, Augustus, Duke of Brunswick, Elector of, I. 263.—III. 1
Harcourt. A. H. C., Prince d', II. 79, 265.—IV. 440
— Henri d', Marquis and Duke and Marshal de, I. 88, 196, 384, 418, 446, 455, 469, 502, 529, 533.—II. 6–8, 10–14, 27, 29, 88, 95, 107–109, 136, 150, 172, 175, 180, 181, 205, 237, 238, 240, 241, 243–245, 247, 334, 418, 419.—III. 44, 49, 55, 131, 132, 134, 185, 226–231, 273–275, 282, 283, 295, 297, 304, 306, 339, 346, 349, 414, 437–440, 443.—IV. 64, 105–107, 151, 192, 242, 366, 459.—V. 63, 65, 159, 173, 180, 222, 300, 301, 336, 348, 354, 355, 358, 374, 375, 382, 384, 388, 427
— Henri de Lorraine, Count d', I. 44, 58.—II. 458.—IV. 440, 441.—V. 36, 156
— Marguerite-Philippe, Countess d', I. 44.—II. 265, 266, 407
— Marie-Françoise de Brancas d'Oise, Princess d', I. 26, 33, 217, 250, 329–331, 333, 334, 391, 402, 422.—II. 79–83, 117, 156, 161, 164, 205, 264, 265.—III. 419.—IV. 440
Harlay, Achille de' (first of the name), I. 85
— — — (second of the name), son of the First-President, I. 120, 121
— — IV, II. 439, 443, 444
— — — (third of the name), First-President of Parliament of Paris, I. 85–87, 91, 98–103, 120, 168, 170–172, 215, 216, 259, 362, 402.—II. 14, 62, 439–444, 484, 485.—III. 31, 251, 476, 477.—IV. 306, 385, 386.—V. 67
— François de, Archbishop of Paris, I., 113, 114, 145–147, 466.—IV. 120.—V. 264, 265, 291
— N. A. d', Intendant of Burgundy, I. 202–205, 239
— Robert, *see* Oxford, Earl of
Harouis, G. de, I. 385
— M. A. Q. de Richebourg, Mme. de, I. 385
Harrach-Bruck, L. T., Count d', I. 446, 448, 452
Hasfield, Claude F. Bidal, Marquis and Marshal de, II. 456.—VI. 74, 194
Haudion, Mme. d', Canoness of Denain, VI. 56–58
Hautefeuille, G. E. L. Texier, Marquis d', II. 193, 195
Hautefort, Chevalier d', VI. 181
— General, III. 176
— Marie, Mlle. de, I. 39
Hauterine, François de l'Aubépine, Marquis de, I. 48
Haye, La, Equerry to the Duke of Berry, IV. 94, 499.—V. 145
Hébert, Bishop of Agen, IV. 123
Heemskirke, Conrad de, Dutch Ambassador, I. 260
Heinsius, Antony, Grand Pensionary, II. 38, 54.—V. 178
Helvetius, A., I. 475.—III. 233.—IV. 476.—VI. 315
Henri IV, King of France, I. 12, 24, 168, 365, 381, 393, 394.—III. 107, 196, 254.—IV. 525, 526.—V. 60, 123, 133, 501
Hesse-Cassel, Frederic, Prince of, II. 145, 401.—III. 341
Heudicourt, Marquis d', III. 200, 201.—IV. 62, 63
— B. de Pons, Marquise d', I. 194, 195, 250, 510.—II. 26, 48, 412, 418.—III, 132, 200, 201.—IV. 62.—V. 300
Hillière, J. F. de Polastron, Chevalier de l', I. 232
Hocqueville, P. de Becdalièvre, Marquis de, II. 308, 310, 311
Hoguette, Fortin de La, Archbishop of Sens, I. 482–485.—II. 238.—V. 406
Hook, Nathaniel, III. 49, 64
Horn, Count d', II. 280
Horn, Count d', VI. 264, 265
Hotman, Vincent, I. 366
Houssaye, La, IV. 230.—VI. 292, 293
Huet, Pierre-Daniel, Bishop of Avranches, previously of Soissons, I. 227
Humbert, IV. 367, 370–372
Humières, Louis de Crevant, Marquis d', I. 33, 34, 84, 157, 305, 514.—II. 75, 308, 309.—III. 192, 193, 448, 451.—IV. 107, 111.—V. 256.—VI. 123, 171, 497, 498
— Duchess de, III. 424
Huxelles, M. de Loge du Blaze, Marquis d', I. 175.—II. 11, 95, 103–106, 109, 326, 327.—III. 295, 296, 333, 440, 441, 443, 444.—IV. 151, 191, 289, 440, 441, 528, 530—V. 160, 173, 348, 355, 360, 424, 429, 462–466.—VI. 37, 38, 48, 53, 54, 61, 65, 92, 109, 136, 142, 144, 148, 150, 158, 159, 168, 322, 337, 427
Hyghens, Dr., VI. 378, 380, 388, 390, 401, 402

Ibagnet (concierge of the Palais-Royal), VI. 79, 126, 130
Ignatius, Saint, VI. 339
Infanta, The, *see* Spain, Infanta of
Infantado, Duke de l', V. 87
Innocent XI, Pope, I. 263, 271, 391, 512.—II. 319, 445.—V. 54, 298.—VI. 328
— XII, Pope, I. 228, 271–273, 279, 283, 284, 287, 312, 343–345, 556, 357, 394, 412, 414, 423, 445, 447.—IV. 436
Intendancies, I. 202
Iseignhien, J. A. de Gand, Prince d', I. 157.—IV. 67, 68, 411.—V. 104
Isenhien-Rodes, Mme. d', V. 104
Isola, F. P., Baron, II. 40

Jacques, Brother, II. 70, 71
James II, King of England, I. xi, xii, 8, 9, 21, 24, 26, 104, 123, 129, 164, 220, 240–242, 253, 264–267, 297, 315, 425, 454, 476, 486, 489, 492, 527–529.—II. 43, 258, 261, 262, 423, 451.—III. 206, 208.—V. 268, 329.—VI. 508, 509
— III, James Francis Edward Stuart, Pretender to the crown of England, I. 527–529.—II. 260, 286.—III. 51–55, 63, 65, 72, 108, 109, 116, 168, 183, 231, 338, 343, 444.—IV. 51, 56, 167, 169, 214, 375, 412, 413, 439, 514.—V. 2, 3, 112, 120, 329, 388, 389, 392–396, 437, 465.—VI. 60, 190, 241, 509, 515
— Duke of Berwick, *see* Berwick, Duke of
Jansen, Cornelius, Bishop of Ypres, III. 358–360.—IV. 435
Janson, Abbé de, afterwards Archbishop of Arles, IV. 70
— T. de Fourbin de, Bishop of Beauvais and Cardinal, I. 223, 245, 446.—II. 319, 512.—III. 214, 362, 449.—IV. 50, 51, 59, 70, 435–437, 451, 459.—VI. 10
Javarin, Bishop of, *see* Saxe-Zeitz, Duke of
Jennings, Admiral Sir John, IV. 471
Jersey, Barbara Chiffinch, Countess of, I. 324, 325
— Edward, 1st Earl of, I. 328–330, 346

John III, Sobieski, King of Poland, I. 206.—II. 271, 512, 513.—IV. 513
Jonsac, V. 412, 413.—VI. 6
Joseph I, King of the Romans, afterwards Emperor of Germany, I. 28, 350.—II. 271, 272, 278, 355, 361, 462.—III. 139, 141, 168, 241, 312, 339.—IV. 92, 183, 214
Jouvency, Father, IV. 418–420
Joyeuse, Jean Armand, Marquis de, and Marshal, I. 29–31, 33, 56–58, 106, 134, 135, 140, 172.—II. 95.—IV. 61
Joyeux, M. Thomassin, called, II. 348, 349
Juan, Don, Bastard of Spain, II. 452
Juisy, Mme., I. 263.—II. 112
Julius II, Pope I. 153
Jussac, Mme. de, I. 211

Konigseck, VI. 205
Königsmark, Philippe-Christophe, Count of, I. 123
Kourakin, Prince, V. 507, 508, 511

Labatie, I. 409, 414
Labaume, Y. de Magonthier de, II. 194
Lacombe, Father, I. 220, 278, 283
Lacroix, Collector-General of Taxes, II. 448.—IV. 168
Lagrange, VI. 209, 210
Laigle, Mme. de, III. 464.—IV. 436
Lalande, J. B. de Deffand, Marquis de, II. 184
Lallemant, Father, V. 56, 57, 172
Lambesc, Prince de, III. 269, 344
Lamoignon, C. F. de, Marquis de Baville *président-à-mortier*, I. 270.—II. 290, 292, 293, 445.—III. 243.—VI. 163, 463
— M. Potier, Mme. II. 290.—V. 111
Langallerie, P. de Gentils de Lajonchalet, Marquis de, II. 355, 356
Langeron, F. A. de, Abbé de, I. 281
— F. A. J. Andrault, Comte de, III. 9
Langlée, Claude, I. 407–409.—II. 169.—III. 44
Langres, Bishop of, *see* Simiane
Lanjamet, C. C. de Vanlouleurs, Baron de, III. 89, 90
Lanti, A. L. de Rovere, Duke de, I. 153, 263.—V. 90
Laon, Bishop of, *see* Clermont-Chaste, L. de
Laparat, Louis de, II. 266, 272, 360
La Rochelle, Bishop of, *see* Champfleur
Lassay, A. de Madaillon de Lesparre, Marquis de, I. 155, 156.—II. 441
Lassé, IV. 124, 190.—VI. 112
La Trappe, Abbé of, *see* Rancé, Armand-Jean le Bouthillier, de
Laullez, Don Patricio (Patrick Lawless), VI. 330, 345, 348, 364, 365, 440
Lausun, Chevalier de, III. 26
— G.-M., Duchess de, I. 129, 130, 173, 174.—II. 48–50, 224, 308, 498.—III. 100, 136, 330, 371.—IV. 34, 45, 46, 187, 325, 494, 520.—V. 11, 232.—VI. 78, 89, 96, 266, 288, 507, 511, 513–515
— N. de Caumont, formerly Marquis de Puyguilhem, Duke de, I. 4, 31, 32, 129–131, 173, 174, 232, 267, 297–299, 510.—II. 26, 48, 50, 88, 101, 171, 238, 280–282, 290, 293, 308, 376.—III. 26, 186, 245, 264, 268, 269, 310, 311.—IV. 46, 79, 157, 187, 513, 520.—V. 11, 414, 454.—VI. 78, 208, 215, 266, 288, 330, 500–516
Laval, Abbé de, afterwards Bishop of Ypres, IV. 434, 435
— Count de, V. 483, 484.—VI. 228, 229, 449
— Mlle. de, II. 303
Lavardin, H. C., Marquis de, I. 512.—II. 110, 111.—VI. 328
Lavienne, *Valet-de-chambre* to the King, I. 137–139.—IV. 71
Law, John, II. 197.—V. 430–434, 494, 500, 506, 507.—VI. 5, 7, 20–23, 28, 30–33, 43, 44, 49, 67, 69–73, 77, 124, 199, 220–222, 229, 234–237, 245, 249–251, 256, 257, 265, 269, 270, 272, 277, 278, 281, 290–292
Lawless, Patrick, *see* Laullez, Don Patricio
Leake, Sir J., III. 52, 105
Leblanc, L. C., Intendant of Auvergne, and later of Ypres, II. 188.—III. 87.—VI, 197, 198, 200, 207, 208, 279, 327, 328, 333, 448, 458, 459, 461, 475, 484–486
Lecomte, Father, I. 182, 183, 426
Lefevre, Captain, I. 55
— King's silversmith, VI. 9
Leon, L. B. de Rohan-Chalot, Prince de, III. 31, 91–96, 450.—VI. 17
Léon, F. de Roquelaure, Princess de, III. 91–96, 450
Leopold I, Emperor, I. 28, 168, 175, 177, 202, 206, 234, 240, 241, 246, 257, 271–273, 338, 350, 382, 383, 417, 418, 436, 437, 459, 468, 512—II. 40, 63, 112, 141, 142, 164, 190, 201, 206, 271, 272, 474
Lescalopier, III. 240
Lesdiguières, A. de Créquy, Duke de. *see* Canaples, Count de
— Jean, François-Paul, Duke de, I. 38, 94, 154, 239, 277, 278, 337.—II. 139, 140, 206
— P. M. F. de Gondi, Duchess de, I. 147, 155, II. 207–210, 508.—IV. 31
Lévi, C. E. de, Marquis de, I. 262.—III. 53, 54.—IV. 314, 318.—V. 133.—VI. 483
— M. F. d'Albert de Luynes, Marquise de, I. 262, 263.—II. 203.—III. 297, 302, 503, 510, 513.—IV. 46, 144, 208, 312, 314, 324.—V. 28, 146, 215.—VI. 216, 238, 239
Liancourt, J. de Schonberg, Duchess de, I. 261.—IV. 474
— R. du Plessis, Duke de la Rocheguyon, Marquis de, I. 261.—IV. 474.—V. 159, 228, 374
Libois, du, VI. 198, 461, 465
Liffard, Earl of, *see* Roye, Count de
Lignery, J. d'Espinay, Marquis de, I. 61
Ligny, Jean de, called Marquis de, I. 229
Linarez, Duchess of, VI. 338
Linières, Father, Confessor to Louis XVI, VI. 446
Liria, Duke de, VI. 329, 341, 342, 348, 354, 370, 388, 389, 407, 408, 422, 423, 443
— Duchess of, VI. 330, 413
Lislebonne, Anne de Lorraine, Countess de, I. 109, 111, 292, 317, 507.—II. 51, 52, 163, 448, 462, 464, 469, 476.—III. 338–340
— Mlle. B. H. de Lorraine de, afterwards Mme. de Remiremont, I. 109, 111, 256, 292, 504–506.—II. 11, 84, 163, 205, 326, 448, 462, 465, 467.—III. 59, 61, 68, 85, 118, 204, 205, 281, 296, 297.—IV. 10, 48, 124, 127, 129, 145, 149, 153, 154, 158, 168, 186, 188, 189, 193, 194.—V. 364.—VI. 38
Livry, Louis Sanguine, Marquis de, I. 93, 297, 354, 355.—II. 307, —V. 19, 213
Lodève, Bishop of, *see* Phélypeaux, J. A.
Longepierre, H. P. de Roqueleyne, Baron de, II. 1, 2
Longueville, Anne-Geneviève de Bourbon, Duchess of, Mme. de. I. 45, 49.—II. 508.—III. 456
— Charles-Louis d'Orleans, Duke de, I. 87, 103, 117, 153, 362.—II. 59, 510.—IV. 524
Lopineau, II. 2
Lorge, Count de, VI. 328, 335, 340, 347, 429
— Duchess de, III. 286.—IV. 503, 504.—VI. 288

Lorge, Geneviève de Frémont, Maréchale, I. 126, 127, 129–131, 134, 135, 140, 141, 150, 154, 251, 343, 476.—II. 47, 70, 88, 89, 91, 92, 156, 215, 490.—III. 36, 100, 267.—VI. 266
— Guy de Durfort, Marshal de, I. 2, 33, 53, 64, 78, 105–107, 126–131, 134, 135, 140, 141, 150, 172–175, 190, 197, 217, 218, 220, 254, 261, 274, 291, 332, 333, 346, 386, 475, 476.—II. 17, 21, 29, 38, 43, 46, 62, 69–77, 207, 357.—III. 97, 267, 293.—IV. 472.—V. 256, 257, 289, 380, 381,—VI. 510
— G. N. de Durfort, Duke de, II. 216, 280, 351.—III. 92, 94, 95, 286, 290, 293, 370.—IV. 438.—V. 11, 384, 387.—VI. 266, 288, 289, 495, 510
— Mlle. Marie-Gabrielle de, I. 126–128. Afterwards Duchess de Saint-Simon, *q.v.*, and wife of the author
Lorraine, Charles IV, Duke of, I. 155, 255, 256, 317.—II. 474
— C. J. A. I., Bishop of Osnabruck, I. 317, 318.—II. 482.—III. 27, 28, 168, 269
— Claude-Françoise de Lorraine, Mlle. de, I. 255
— Elizabeth Charlotte d'Orleans, Duchess of, I. 316–318, 385, 391.—II. 84, 167.—III. 311, 455.—V. 217, 414.—VI. 36, 37, 41, 178, 480, 505, 508, 513, 514. *See* under Orleans for earlier references
— Emmanuel, Prince of, II. 355
— Leopold Joseph I, Duke of, I. 206, 234, 255, 257, 314–319, 334, 385–387, 390, 393, 417.—II. 84, 265, 338, 462, 474, 480–482.—III. 6, 340.—IV. 188, 229, 412.—V. 148.—VI. 36–40, 390
— Louis de, *see* Armagnac, Count de
— Nicolas François, Cardinal de, I. 255
— Nicole de Lorraine, Duchess of, I. 255, 256
— Philippe de, Chevalier de, I. 13–15, 18, 125, 315, 317, 329, 386, 387, 402, 504, 519–521.—II. 83, 84, 465.—III. 164, 166.—IV. 368.—V. 157.—VI. 452
— Prince Jean Paul of, Count de Lislebonne, I. 61, 67.—III. 256
Lospital, Mme., V. 394–396
Louis, Dauphin of France, I. xiv, 10, 17, 18, 23, 55, 64, 84, 105, 106, 109–111, 131, 151–153, 182, 188–191, 200, 201, 234, 237, 253, 258, 265, 266, 289, 292, 293, 297, 300, 318, 350, 351, 370, 378, 386, 403, 406, 437, 449, 451–454, 456, 457, 477, 478, 490, 496, 505–507, 529.—II. 2, 11, 52, 85, 105, 106, 145, 163, 212, 222, 259, 273, 281, 282, 322, 326, 327, 344, 349, 383, 389, 403, 405, 406, 414, 436, 448, 449, 465, 467, 469, 470, 475, 477–479, 488, 500, 504, 511.—III. 11, 14, 32–34, 36, 61, 68–70, 78, 80, 81, 94, 117, 118, 135–138, 151–153, 155, 178, 179, 181, 182, 184, 188, 193, 214, 216, 219, 220, 231, 232, 258–263, 272, 273, 280–283, 295–298, 300, 301, 309, 313, 315, 316, 319, 321, 328, 332, 337, 350–352, 371, 376, 380–382, 384, 395, 399, 402, 441, 443, 444, 450, 457, 459, 465–467, 469, 470, 477, 478, 494, 499, 500, 502, 504–506, 509, 510, 512, 513, 516, 518.—IV. 7–15, 17, 19–24, 27, 30, 40, 41, 43–46, 48, 52, 72, 85–91, 95–97, 99, 106, 111, 115–117, 124–168, 178, 185, 188, 190–196, 199, 200, 209, 211, 214–216, 245, 249, 254, 255, 265, 281, 317, 324, 336, 345, 351, 363, 498, 508, 525.—V. 1, 28, 37, 99, 100, 273, 299, 302, 311, 321, 324, 326, 381–383.—VI. 284, 378, 475, 484
— XIII, King of France, I. 35–44, 47, 51, 74, 84, 85, 87, 98, 119, 434, 436, 451.—III. 107, 255.—IV. 391.—V. 14, 60, 202, 501.—VI. 473
Louis XIV, King of France:
VOL. I.: Sketch of his reign, ix–xv; appoints Saint-Simon to the Musketeers, 3; reviews troops at Compiègne, 4; at the siege of Namur, 5–8; hears the news of the battle of La Hogue, 9, 10; his bastards and his marriage projects for them, 12–28; how he schemed to get the Duke of Chartres, his nephew, as husband for his natural daughter, Mlle. de Blois, 12–15; his interview with M. de Chartres and Monsieur and Madame, his parents, 16, 17; marries his natural son, the Duke du Maine, to a daughter of the Prince de Condé, 25, 26; he makes seven new Marshals, 29; he takes command of one of his armies in Flanders, 33; his kindness to Saint-Simon at his father's death, 35; at the head of his army in Flanders, 52; he returns to Versailles, 53, 55; pensions his First Physician, D'Aquin, and appoints Fagon in his place, 68–70; his action in the Luxembourg Peerage case, 85, 90; raises the rank of his natural sons above all peers, except Princes of the Blood, 98–100; his discovery of the plot of Clermont and Mlle. de Choin, 110, 111; gets the Bishop of Noyon elected to the Academy, 112–114; receives the new Duchess de Saint-Simon with the utmost distinction, 129; his remarks on the marriage of the Duke de Lausun, 130; his reception of the news of the Duke du Maine's want of action, 137, 138; loses his temper and beats a footman, 138; nominates the Bishop of Orleans for Cardinal, 147, 148; appoints M. de Vendôme Archbishop of Paris, 149; his interest in the fortunes of M. de Cavoye, his Quartermaster, 161–163; laid up with a carbuncle, 181; arranges the household of the Princess of Savoy, 182; expresses his dislike of the Duchess du Lude to Monsieur, 184; goes to Montargis to meet the Princess of Savoy, and brings her to Paris, 200, 201; makes peace with Holland, 202; negotiates for the Prince of Conti to become King of Poland, 206; Rubentel and Mme. de Saint-Géran in disgrace with him, 208, 209; revenges himself on Lord Galway by confiscating his property in France, 214, 215; refuses his permission for Pontchartrain's son to marry Mlle. de Malouse, 217, 218; his gifts to the Count de Maurepas on his marriage, 220; he heals the quarrel between the Bishop of Orleans and M. de Rochefoucauld, 230, 231; he sends away the Italian players, 232, his feelings towards the Prince of Conti, 235, 236; makes peace with Holland at Ryswick, 239–241; acknowledges William as King of England, 241, 242; his reason for disliking William, 242; pleased with Mme. de Saint-Simon, and at her introduction into the Princess's circle, 251; his lavish expenditure at the Princess's marriage, 252; at the encampment at Compiègne, 295–302; his displeasure with Dom Gervaise, 308; his action in the matter, 311; his displeasure at two breaches of court etiquette, 333; his embarrassment at Racine's absent-minded reference to Scarron, before Mme. de Maintenon, 348; he pays the debts of Mme. la Duchesse and of Monseigneur, 350, 351; he orders all the claimants of Neuchâtel to return, 353; the fringes which had been stolen from the curtains at the palace are thrown on to his table whilst he is at supper, 354, 355; a blacksmith from Salon comes to inform him of a vision he has had, 357–

Louis XIV, King of France: *Continued*
359; he grants fresh distinction to his bastards, 361; he appoints Pontchartrain Chancellor, 369; and Chamillart Controller-General of Finance, 370, 371; and Pomponne as Foreign Secretary, 377; his intervention stops a quarrel between the Jesuits and Benedictines, 395; his retrenchment in not paying for alterations made by courtiers in their apartments, 397; he again pays the debts of Mme. la Duchesse, 407; he again prepares for war, 478, 479; he refuses the services of the Duke of Chartres in the war, 480, 481; he reproaches the Duke of Orleans for the Duke of Chartres' behaviour, 488; he is called from his sleep to the Duke of Orleans' death-bed, 490, 491; his kind reception of the Duke of Chartres, 492; in anger at the failure of the troops in Italy, he sends Villeroy to assume command, 508; his reconciliation with the Duchess of Orleans, and his generosity to the new Duke, 516–519; he visits James II on his death-bed and recognises his son as King of England, 527, 529; his prosperity ends, 534
VOL. II.: How he decides about the King of Spain going to the army in Italy, 8–13; his displeasure at Saint-Simon's resignation from the army, 19–21; his embarrassment on learning that Mme. de Maintenon had Cattinat's papers suppressed, 34–36; at the death of William III he forbids his French relations to wear mourning, 38; he appoints ten new marshals, 95; he grants permission to Félix to visit Port-Royal and from his report modifies his views of the house, 118–120; his kindness to the Archbishop of Reims, 124; when reminded of her services to the State he destroys a *lettre de cachet* for the Duchess of Portsmouth, 153; his action in the matter of the collection at High Mass at the New Year celebration, 155–164; he recalls the Duchess of Nemours from banishment, 165; he recalls Mme. des Ursins from the Spanish Court and sends her into banishment, 177; he prevents Troisville from being elected to the Academy, 183; he tries to revive under the Duchess of Burgundy the assemblies which the Queen, his mother, had held, 232; he decides to bestow the Order on all Marshals of France, 237, 241; his distinguished treatment of the Princess des Ursins, 246, 248, 256, 258–261, 275; he intervenes in the dispute between Surville and La Barre, 289; he insists on every one at Court attending a masquerade, 317, 318; he renews his gift of 50,000 livres on the *Octroi* of Lyons to Marshal de Villeroy, 330; his irritation at Villeroy's mismanagement in the war, 368–370; recalls him, 371; he gives judgment in two disputes, 376; he discontinues his gifts to the Sons and Daughters of France on account of the war, 413; the reversions he granted and appointments he made, 413, 414; he acquires the presentation of Abbess to the Priory of Poissy, 422; his appointment of generals to the armies, 424; his desire to retain Chamillart in a double capacity, 428, 429; he entertains the Prince of Vaudemont at Marly, 463; but rebukes his presumption, 477, 478
VOL. III: The ceremony at his Communion, 12–14; his annoyance at the behaviour of Mme. de Torcy, 15–17; his visit to the Duke d'Antin at Petit-Bourg, 20, 21; how Mme. de Maintenon preserved her power over him, 39; he appoints Desmarets Controller-General, 42; he objects to a Jansenist but not to an Atheist, 47; he receives James II at Marly, 54, 55; he does the honours of Marly for S. Bernard, 75; his anxiety about Lille, 143, 147, 148, 152; his reception of the Duke of Burgundy on his return from the war, 180; and of M. de Vendôme, 184; and Marshal Boufflers, 185, 186; the illness and death of his Father Confessor, 194–196; appointment of a successor, 197–199; he shows Louvois to be wrong as to the width of a window of Trianon, 206, 207; has a sharp attack of cholic, 244; he dismisses Chamillart, 284–286; a change in his manner with M. de Saint-Simon, 292; he treats the Duke of Orleans with coolness, 313; he calls on Marshal Villars, 374; he complies with Maréchal's request to grant Saint-Simon an audience, 378, 379; the Duke of Orleans sees him and he banishes Mme. d'Argenton, 405–407; he fixes the time for Saint-Simon's audience, 412, 413; the interview, 415–420; Mme. de Maintenon's method of managing him, 430, 431; he makes none of his accustomed New Year's gifts to his family, 437; he settles a dispute of precedence, 457–460; his promotion of the bastards, 465–469; his treatment of the Bishop of Metz in the matter of his peerage, 478–481; his attempt at economy, 511; the Duke of Orleans' letter to him asking permission for the marriage between the Duke of Berry and Mademoiselle, 514–519
VOL. IV.: He speaks to Monseigneur about the marriage of the Duke of Berry, 20; he asks the Duke of Berry if he would like to be married, 21; he insists on Mme. de Saint-Simon accepting the post of Lady-of-Honour to the Duchess of Berry, 37, 38; he announces Mme. de Saint-Simon's appointment, 43, 44; his anger against Cardinal de Bouillon, 65, 66; he is comforted by the decision of the Sorbonne that no subject possessed any private property, it was all his, 83; he is soon consoled for Monseigneur's death, 166; he decides regarding the precedence of Saint-Simon over the Duke de Rochefoucauld, 185; he insists on the Duchess of Berry accompanying the Court although she is not in a fit condition, 272; he is asked to decide a point between the Bishops and Cardinal de Noailles, 304, 305; he adopts the custom of dining with Mme. de Maintenon, weekly, 312; the Duke of Burgundy's last interview with him, 331; the void left him by the death of the Dauphiness, 355, 356; his reluctance to see Marshal de Villeroy, 356; he gives orders for a *post-mortem* examination of the Dauphin. 358; he refuses to send the Duke of Orleans to the Bastille, 367; Maréchal advises him that nothing would be found to inculpate the Duke of Orleans, 371, 372; he gives orders for no alterations in the usual amusements though the Dauphin and Dauphiness are still unburied, 374; he appoints Father de la Rue confessor to the Duke of Berry, 375; the difficulties of guaranteeing his renunciations with regard to the throne of Spain, 390–392; he pays a visit to the Count de Toulouse, 393; he grants a pension to the Duke of Berry and admits him to the Council of Despatches, 393; he still feels the void left by the death of the Duchess of Burgundy, 405;

Louis XIV, King of France: *Continued*
he makes further provision for the two sons of the Duke du Maine, 406; the registration by the Parliament of his renunciation of the Spanish throne, 427, 428, 430, 431; his anger at the proposal of a marriage between the Prince of Conti and the daughter of the Duke of Orleans, 445; he settles the question of precedence between Saint-Simon and the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, 473–480; he hears from an outside source that the King of Spain intends to marry the Princess of Parma, 504; he appoints Voysin in place of Chancellor Pontchartrain, 512; he legitimises his natural sons, 521–530
VOL. V.: He pays the Duchess of Berry's debts, 1; he makes his will, 3, 5–10; his reliance on Mme. de Maintenon and M. du Maine, 4–6; his health beginning to fail, 38; his wedding present to the new Queen of Spain, 42; his endeavours to induce the Pope to interpret the Constitution or to allow a National Council, 44; his approval of the Duke of Orleans' friendship for Saint-Simon, 50, 51; he is angry that members of the Parliament should say he made too many Peers, 68; the First-President has an interview with him, 69; his decision in the affair of the cap, 74; he receives an Ambassador from Persia, 93–95; his last visit to Marly, 107; his declining health, 110; bets in England that he will not live three months, 110, 111; his anger with Daguesseau for opposing the Constitution, 117; his health still declining, 118; further decline in his health, 200; his last time of driving, and his last time out of doors, 211; farewell audience to the Persian Ambassador, 211, 212; his enormous appetite, 213, 214; he deputes M. du Maine to review the Gendarmerie for him, 215–217; the progress of his illness, 237; the general arrangements and routine since his confinement to his room, 238; on Saturday he passes a bad night, 238; and on Sunday he is much worse, but he makes a codicil to his will, 239; he makes his confession and receives the last Sacrament, 240; he sees all his family and passes another bad night, 241; Cardinals de Rohan and Bissy remain with him, 242; he promises them to accept the Constitution and sends for Cardinal de Noailles, 243; he appoints Marshal de Villeroy Governor to the Dauphin, he sends for M. le Duc and the Prince de Conti, 244; he sends for the Dauphin and blesses him, 245; he bids adieu to M. du Maine and the Count de Toulouse, 245, the Duke of Orleans and Mme. du Maine, and orders Vincennes to be prepared for his successor, 246; he tries an elixir prepared by a Provençal peasant, 247; he has another bad night, he hears another Mass, he seems stronger, 248; the improvement in his condition passes, 250; on Friday he is very ill, and on Saturday unconscious, 251; and dies on Sunday morning, 252; his character, 253, and sketch of his reign, 254–331; his will read, 338, 339; his heart taken to the Jesuits' Church, 348, 349; his body taken to St. Denis, 350; his obsequies, 367; his intimacy with Mlle. de Chausseraye, 438–441
— XV, for previous references *see* Anjou, Louis, Duke of, V. 348, 350–352, 389, 390, 397, 402, 413, 434, 438, 454–456, 458, 467, 468, 471, 480, 495, 506, 507, 509, 511, 512–515, 521, 522 —VI. 4–6, 9, 27, 29, 30, 33, 66, 67, 73–75, 81–84, 89, 90, 93, 95, 101, 103, 105, 108, 110–112, 114, 118–120, 129, 132, 136, 138, 143, 153, 159, 160, 162–170, 183, 184, 206, 210, 229, 238–240, 243, 244, 250, 251, 255, 257, 258, 268, 294–296, 309–311, 313, 315–317, 319–325, 327, 332, 333, 337, 338, 345, 347, 348, 350, 351, 353, 372, 402, 426, 427, 431, 444–450, 452, 453, 455–466, 470, 472, 477–480, 483, 484, 488, 494, 498–500, 517, 518, 522, 525
Louis-Guillaume, Prince of Baden, *see* Baden, Prince of
Louvigny, Duke de, VI. 169
Louville, C. A. d'Allonville, Marquis de, I. 75, 77, 197, 279, 525, 526, 529, 530.—II. 6, 39, 51, 95, 136–138, 148, 149, 321, 482.—III. 90, 270.—V. 400, 401, 447–450, 457.—VI. 101, 103, 171
Louvois, Abbé de, IV. 183
— Anne de Souvré, Mme. de, I. 104, 131.—V. 269, 397, 398
— François le Tellier, Marquis de, I. x, 21–23, 31, 32, 75, 84, 90, 106, 126, 131, 161, 162, 173, 176, 274, 292, 340, 341, 365, 367, 377–380, 420, 466, 505.—II. 73–75, 96, 101, 103, 104, 107, 153, 222, 228, 262, 295, 296, 356, 357, 421, 491.—III. 39, 44, 45, 188, 206–208, 265, 280, 290, 291, 481.—IV. 218, 344.—V. 96, 175, 176, 178, 255–257, 261, 263–270, 275, 276, 279, 291, 296, 298, 409.—VI. 47, 502, 503, 506
Löwestein, F. C., Count von, I. 189.—IV. 413
— Countess von, *see* Dangeau, Mme, de
Luc, Count du, II. 198.—IV. 92.—V. 331
Lucan, Patrick Sarsfield, Titular Earl of, I. 61, 261
Luce, P. S. de Montmorency-Luxembourg, Count de, I. 156, 157
Luçon, Bishop of, *see* Valderies
Lude, M. L. de Béthune Sully, Duchess du, formerly Countess de Gauche, *q.v.*, I. 174, 182–185, 187, 201, 207, 250, 251, 253, 259, 260, 330, 333, 334, 374, 510.—II. 20, 21, 159, 160, 258, 478.—III. 62, 63, 220, 322, 372.—IV. 5, 45, 47, 259, 294, 349, 350.—V. 102, 300, 310.—VI. 313
— H. de Daillon, Duke du, I., 183.—II. 417
— — — Count, afterwards Duke du, II. 290.—IV. 504
Lumboriski, S. H., Prince, I. 237
Lusignan, H. F. de Luzignan-Lezay, Marquis de, II. 435
— P. L. P., Bishop of Rodez, II. 435
Lussan, J. d'Audibert, Count de, I. 442.—II. 485–487
— M. F. Raymond, Countess de, I. 443.—II. 484–490.—III. 418, 436, 464, 472, 499
Luxembourg, Angélique-Cunigoude de Montmorency de, Princess de Neufchâtel, I. 118
— Chevalier de, III. 157
— Duke de, I. 120, 153, 154, 168–172, 404, 405, 430, 443.—II. 15, 29, 364.—III. 221–223, 356.—IV. 192.—V. 159, 228.—VI. 506
— F. de Montmorency, Duke de, and Marshal, Duke I. 4–6, 33, 52–58, 62–66, 74, 80–85, 87–90, 92–97, 100–103, 105, 107, 109–111, 117–121, 132, 156, 179, 269, 270, 326, 327, 362, 391, 430.—II. 45, 263, 441, 445.—III. 214, 287, 356.—IV. 105, 151, 193.—V. 258, 373, 374
— Madeleine-Charlotte, Duchess of, I. 89, 404, 405, 430, 511, 512
— M. G. Gillier, Duchess of, *née* de Clérembault, I. 154, 169
— Marie-Léon d'Albert de, Seigneur de Brantes, I. 36, 47

Luxembourg, P. S. de Montmorency, Count de, I. 119. Afterwards Duke de Châtillon, *q.v.*
Luynes, Chevalier de, I. 439.—II. 332
— H. C. d'Albert, Duke de, I. 437–439.—II. 163, 202, 203, 332.—III. 113, 447, 448, 507.—IV. 362, 394, 395.—V. 367.—VI. 284
Lyonne, I. 294, 377.—III. 400
Lyons, Archbishop of, *see* Villeroy

Maboul, Louis, I. 360
Macañas, V. 39, 92
Macaulay, Lord, I. v. 81
"Madame," *see* Orleans, Elizabeth-Charlotte, Duchess of
— Historical explanation of the title, III. 255, 256
"Madame la Princesse," *see* Condé, Princess of
— Historical explanation of the title, III. 254
"Mademoiselle," *see* Orleans, Elizabeth Charlotte, daughter of Philip, Duke of Orleans
— Historical explanation of the title, III. 256
Madot, Father. I. 248
Magalotti, II. 262
Magnac, J. Arnolfini, Count de, II. 64, 65
Magny, Intendant at Caen, III. 328.—VI. 352
Magueux, Étienne, I. 91
Mahony, Daniel, General, II. 22, 24–27, 485.—IV. 78
Maillebois, III. 183
Mailly, F. de, Archbishop of Arles, afterwards of Reims, and Cardinal, I. 398, 530.—II. 286–288, 421.—IV. 69.—V. 222, 333, 335, 336, 375, 482.—VI. 479
— Louis, Count de, I. 23, 345, 346
— M. A. F. de, Saint Hermione, Countess de, I. 20, 23, 182, 183, 185, 195, 201, 209, 251, 346, 397, 422.—II. 214, 286, 288, 337, 338.—IV. 48, 177, 195, 310, 311, 348.—V. 453
— Mme. de Abbess of Poisy, II. 421, 422
— Mlle. de, I. 423, and *see* Vrillière, Mme. de la
Maine, A. L. B., Duchess of, I. 26, 44I. 11,—48–50, 105, 264, 265, 303, 304, 326, 423, 471, 485, 488.—III. 32, 218, 246, 247, 325, 435–437, 456, 458, 459, 467, 468, 471–474.—IV. 180, 186, 308, 360, 362, 501.—V. 68, 71–73, 140, 189, 219, 223, 246, 251, 355, 404–406, 414, 483–490.—VI. 18, 26, 27, 48, 49, 63, 64, 67–69, 84, 117, 134, 182, 200–204, 210, 212, 228, 229, 245, 266, 318, 325, 525
— Louis Auguste, Duke of, natural son of the King, I. xii–xv, 4, 12, 25–28, 32, 33, 67, 98–100, 109, 132–134, 136–139, 172, 194, 210, 211, 234, 237, 270, 276, 289, 315–, 361, 441, 442, 482.—II. 1, 7, 14, 34, 41, 42, 48–50, 105, 109, 110, 112, 130, 203, 263, 266, 303, 304, 313, 326, 345, 370, 386, 424, 444, 470–472, 488, 494, 498, 500, 506.—III. 68, 70, 117, 127–129, 133, 140, 146, 184, 216, 218, 247, 253, 297, 325, 347, 408, 435, 436, 440, 443, 452, 453, 456, 458, 459, 464–474, 503, 504.—IV. 73, 98, 115–117, 151, 157, 179–181, 185, 186, 189, 191, 211, 251, 252, 260, 306, 308, 359–366, 368–370, 376, 378, 384, 406, 409, 410, 420–424, 439, 490, 500, 501, 512, 522–525, 527–530.—V. 3–79, 11–16, 34, 36–38, 58, 61–65, 68–76, 84, 94, 100, 102, 107, 124, 131, 140, 148–154, 160–162, 184–186, 189–193, 201, 203, 205, 211, 215–217, 219, 220, 223, 228, 238, 239, 241, 244–247, 249–251, 281, 289, 299, 300, 314, 315, 319, 320, 327, 330, 337–346, 349, 350, 355, 368–372, 389, 391, 392, 403–406, 411, 412, 424, 426, 429, 445, 446, 453, 468, 471, 483, 486–489, 491, 511.—VI. 18, 26, 27, 38, 49, 63, 64, 70, 72, 74–76, 81–88, 90, 91, 93–95, 100–102, 105, 106, 108–118, 120, 122, 123, 126–128, 131–134, 136, 138–142, 147–155, 162, 163, 165–169, 174, 176–179, 182, 185, 195, 200–204, 217, 229, 241, 245, 247, 266, 285, 324, 325, 464, 479, 484, 508, 528
Maintenon, Francoise-Marie, Mme. de, I. xii–xv, 12, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25–28, 35, 53, 62, 68, 70, 84, 87, 95, 138, 139, 143–147, 149, 157–160, 182–187, 189, 191, 194, 195, 201, 210, 212, 222, 223, 228, 232, 235, 237, 246–251, 253, 257, 258, 275, 276, 278–282, 300–302, 305, 310, 329, 331, 334, 342, 346–348, 351, 356, 360, 364, 365, 367, 368, 371, 372, 392, 398, 400, 406, 407, 422, 423, 428, 449, 451, 454, 461–463, 466, 471, 490, 491, 493, 497, 501–503, 506, 509–511, 516–518, 527, 530, 533, 534.—II. 1, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 26–28, 34–36, 49, 63–65, 69, 79, 81, 83, 85, 87, 105, 106, 108, 117, 121–123, 133, 134, 137, 138, 147, 155–157, 168, 170, 172, 175, 179–181, 190, 205, 206, 213, 218, 219, 225, 231, 232, 240, 243, 244, 247–250, 252, 253, 255–260, 263, 266, 274, 275, 279, 286, 288, 295, 298, 320, 326, 330, 337, 341, 350, 351, 353, 354, 371, 377, 387, 388, 400, 401, 412, 413, 415, 418–420, 423, 426, 435, 444, 445, 449, 450, 465–468, 472, 476, 488, 494, 498, 501, 505, 506, 510.—II. 14, 15, 20, 32, 35, 36, 38–42, 44, 49, 50, 55, 61, 70, 83–86, 89, 94, 104, 115, 127–129, 131–136, 139, 146, 156, 162, 164, 172, 174, 176, 178–185, 188, 191, 192, 200, 201, 215, 219, 220, 226, 227, 230, 231, 259–261, 263, 273–276, 280–283, 285–291, 294–297, 299–302, 306, 308, 315, 316, 318–320, 325, 328, 329, 337, 346, 347, 350, 353–355, 361, 362, 366, 390, 396, 397, 400–408, 410, 411, 422–426, 429–432, 437, 438, 441, 443, 449, 456, 457, 460, 465, 470, 494, 499, 503, 504, 508–511, 513, 515, 516, 518.—IV. 9, 10, 13–15, 17, 19, 20, 31, 33–35, 40–43, 46–48, 52, 55, 59, 62, 63, 69, 72, 73, 113, 114, 121, 127–129, 133–135, 138, 145, 146, 149–151, 153, 154, 161, 162, 166, 167, 172–174, 177, 178, 180, 189, 190, 192, 195, 200, 203, 208, 209, 211, 212, 226, 228, 229, 232–234, 240, 258–260, 270–272, 292–294, 299–302, 310, 312, 314, 316, 318–323, 326, 327, 329–331, 336, 345, 350, 354–359, 361–363, 365–369, 371, 377–380, 395, 400, 404–406, 410, 416, 425, 438, 449, 451, 452, 457, 476, 481–484, 490, 491, 493, 495, 499, 500, 504, 510, 512, 523, 525.—V. 3–8, 10–12, 14, 16, 18, 28, 36–38, 41, 48, 49, 76, 82, 84, 86, 87, 90, 99–102, 107, 119, 120, 124, 131, 140, 141, 143, 146, 155–157, 159–162, 173, 184, 185, 203, 211, 212, 214–216, 226, 237–243, 245–247, 251, 258, 264–267, 277, 281, 286–296, 298–312, 314, 315, 319, 326, 327, 329, 330, 349, 350, 391, 401, 403, 453, 471, 512, 513.—VI. 190, 195, 215–217, 285
Maisne, M., secretary to M. de la Trappe, I. 198, 307
Maisons, J. de Longueil, Marquis de, I. 169, 170.—II. 5.—IV. 66, 516–522, 528–530.—V. 15, 160, 193, 203–207, 238, 444.—VI. 25
— Maréchale de, IV. 516, 517
Malachie, Dom, I. 309, 311
Malause, Charles, Baron de, I. 218
— M. G., Mlle. de, I. 217, 218.—VI. 510
Malezieux, Nicolas, I. 224
Manchester, C. Montagu, Earl, afterwards Duke of, I. 529
Mancini, M. de, II. 447.—IV. 505
— Mme., II. 446.—IV. 506
Manneville, Mme. de, I. 27
Manriquez, Don Boniface, III. 315
Mans, Bishop of, III. 367
Mansart, J. H., I. 335, 336, 431.—II. 116.—76–81, 480.—V. 281

Mansera, A. G. de Toledo-Molina, Marquis of, II. 148.—IV. 76
Mansfeldt, H. F., Count de, I. 246, 512.—II. 141.—III. 171
Mantua, Duchess of, *see* Elbœuf, Mlle. d'
— Charles IV, Duke of, I. 479.—II. 152, 182, 205–210, 359, 462
Manville, J. de B. de, II. 273
Mar, John, 11th Earl of, V. 388, 393, 466
Marche, L. A. de Bourbon, Count de la, II. 227
Marchin, Ferdinand, Count de, and Marshal, I. 502, 503, 526, 529.—II. 6, 132, 144, 190–192, 194, 195, 199, 202, 230, 266, 279, 302, 360, 363, 364, 368, 379, 384, 386, 387, 389–394, 396, 397, 399, 400, 424–426.—IV. 337
Marcieu, Chevalier de, VI. 242
Marck, R. F. A., Count de la, I. 411
— L. P. E., Count de la, I. 415
— M. M. de Rohan-Chabot, Countess de la, II. 324
Maré, M. L. R. de Grancey, Mme. du, I. 390.—III. 396.—IV. 16, 18, 52, 53
Maréchal, Georges, First Surgeon to the King, I. 532, 533.—II. 70, 71, 118–120, 171, 279, 407, 445.—III. 195, 196, 238, 348, 350, 362, 372, 373, 378, 379, 413, 420, 422.—IV. 81, 82, 242, 260, 290, 357–359, 361, 367, 370–372.—V. 3, 8, 35, 49–51, 132, 212, 214, 239, 242, 251, 252, 320
Marége, M., I. 238
Mareuil, Mlle. de, I. 25
Maria-Theresa, Queen-Consort of Louis XIV, I. x–xii, xv, 162, 163, 168, 183, 258, 329, 358.—II. 137, 233.—III. 162.— IV. 351, 391, 395.—V. 290, 291.—VI. 503
Marillac, II. 94
Marin, Jean, Brigadier, I. 6, 7
Marivaux, III. 355, 356
Marlborough, J. Churchill, Duke of, II. 38, 43, 187, 190–194, 201, 213, 236, 242, 279, 280, 364–366, 377, 388.—III. 1, 2, 11, 110, 116, 117, 141, 147, 151, 152, 157, 158, 176, 183, 187, 335, 336, 341, 342.—IV. 55, 57, 64, 65, 283, 284, 393.—V. 2, 3
— Sarah Jennings, Duchess of, II. 43
Marsan, F., Count de, I. 154, 317, 331, 485, 504.—II. 162, 171, 172, 458.—III. 43, 160–168
Marseilles, Bishop of, *see* Belzunce
Marsillac, F. de Rochefoucauld, Prince de, I. 275
— H. A. de la Rochefoucauld, Abbé de, I. 276
Martineau, Father, I. 431.—III. 154, 155.—IV. 375
Martinozzi, Mme., II. 446.—IV. 506
Mary of Modena, Consort of James II of England, I. 24, 32, 104, 129, 241, 242, 253, 315, 454, 489, 492, 527, 528.—II. 173, 181, 258, 262, 423, 451.—III. 52, 54, 55.—IV. 51, 167, 168, 375, 413, 476, 506.—V. 10–12, 300, 311, 314, 324, 329, 393, 394.—VI. 52, 216, 332, 509
Mary, Queen of England and Princess of Orange, I. 123
Massenar, Prince de, IV. 92.—VI. 422
Massilon, Father, III. 222
Mathan, Abbé de, VI. 328, 340, 424
Mattignon, Jacques de Torigny, Count de, I. 337, 504, 513.—II. 143, 508–510.—III. 43, 167.—VI. 232
— Marshal de, II. 508–510.—III. 72, 73, 111.—V. 93, 94, 412.—VI. 232
Maulévrier, C. A. de Langeron, Abbé de, afterwards Bishop of Autun, III. 100, 101, 221.—IV. 70, 71
— Chevalier de, II. 457
— E. F. Colbert, Count de, I. 30
Maulévrier, F. E. Colbert, Marquis de, I. 254.—II. 215–218, 242, 243, 249, 268, 269, 314, 350–353.—VI. 330, 340, 341, 346–349, 354–359, 362, 366–369, 393, 397–399, 402, 406, 436, 438, 439
— M. H. de F. de Tessé, Countess de, II. 216
Maupertuis, Louis de Melun, Marquis of, General, I. 3, 4.—III. 347
Maurepas, Count de, V. 378–380.—VI. 44
— E. C. de la Rochefoucauld Roye, Countess de, I. 251, 303, 304.—II. 90, 230.—III. 16, 99–102, 204.—V. 380
— Jérôme, Phélypeaux, Count de, and de Pontchartrain, I. 74, 125, 127, 128, 130, 157, 217–220, 303, 304, 375.—II. 229–231, 245, 290, 346, 371.—III. 9–11, 51, 59, 99–102, 178, 180, 204, 232, 295, 316, 319–321, 439, 478, 481, 515.—IV. 31–34, 135, 194, 195, 213, 217–224, 230–239, 254, 274–278, 322, 423–426, 446, 447, 495.—V. 35, 93, 95, 161, 184, 212, 248, 274, 304, 333, 355, 356, 360–363, 377–380, 411
Mazarin, A. C. de la Porte, Duke de, I. 154, 361.—IV. 401, 402.—VI. 113, 501
— H. Mancini, Duchess de, I. 361.—II. 140, 141, 446.—VI. 473
— Jules, Cardinal, I. ix, x, 21, 42, 46, 81, 180, 245, 398, 399, 528,—II. 140, 146, 262, 291, 292, 446, 447.—III. 161.—IV. 401, 451, 478, 505–507, 513.—V. 167, 254, 356, 443.—VI. 472–474, 501
Méan, Baron de, I. 533
Meaux, Bishop of, *see* Bossuet, J. B. and Bissy
Mecklenburg, Montmorency-Bouteville, Duchess of, I. 118, 119, 157
Médavid, J. L. R. de Grancey, Count de, II. 396, 398, 401, 405, 407, 461, 462.—III. 11.—IV. 98
Médici, Catherine de, I. 85
Medici, Cosmo de, *see* Tuscany, Cosmo de Medici, Grand-Duke of
— Francis, Cardinal de, II. 359, 360.—III. 327, 444
Medina-Cali, L. F. de Cabrera, Duke of, II. 137.—IV. 482.—VI. 415
Medina-Sidonia, H. A. E. Z. de Guzman el Bueno, Duke of, I. 446, 526
Mejercrone, H. M., I. 219
Mélac, Governor of Landau, II. 53, 55, 62, 63
Melfort, John Drummond, titular Earl of, I. 476.—II. 261
Méliant, II. 306, 307, 311
Melleraye, Charles de la Porte, Duke de la, and Marshal, I. 38, 154, 169.—II. 446.—III. 223, 483.—IV. 401, 506
— Marie de Cossé, Maréchale de la, I. 47.—III. 414, 482, 483
Melun, L. M. T., Mlle. de, I. 293.—II. 1.—III. 220.—IV. 127, 145
Mémon and Rochefort, M. M., Academy of, I. 2
Ménager, IV. 289, 440
Mercy, III. 339, 340.—IV. 368
Merinville, Abbé de, afterwards Bishop of Chartres, III. 354, 355
— G. de Moustiers, Count de, II. 376
Mesmes, Abbé de, IV. 308
— Chevalier de, IV. 308, 309
— de, First-President, II. 105, 130, 444.—III. 440.—IV. 306–310, 512, 513, 517, 522, 530.—V. 9–12, 59, 63–70, 72–75, 117, 160, 189–191, 203, 211, 333, 336–338, 345, 346, 368, 370, 371, 404, 405, 429, 442–444, 482, 483, 489.—VI. 5, 26, 29, 30, 36, 64–66, 76, 132, 135, 152–154, 158, 160–169, 266, 271, 288, 289, 300, 301, 495
Mesmin, I. 335
Metternich, Baron, Bishop of Munster, III. 168

Metz, Archbishop of, *see* d'Aubusson, Feuillade, Coislin
Meunier, Le, III. 476, 477
Mezières, General, VI. 193
Middleton, Charles, 2nd Earl of, II. 262.—III. 51, 53–55
Mignard, Pierre, I. 131, 156
Millain, VI. 113, 117, 119, 125, 126, 129, 130, 133, 148, 293–295
Minas, A. L. de Sousa, Marquis de Las, II. 453, 455, 457
Miramion, M. Bonneau, Mme. de, I. 165, 166, 395
Mirepoix, G. C. P. de Levis, Marquis, afterwards Duke de, I. 360
— G. J. B. de Levis, Marquis de, I. 360
Modena, Alphonse d'Este, Duke of, IV. 506.—VI. 11, 190, 255
— Duchess of, II. 446.—IV. 506
— Prince of, VI. 255
— Renaud d'Este, Duke of, I. 28, 350
Mogul, The Great, V. 506
Mohun, Charles, Lord, IV. 393
Molina, Louis, III. 358–362.—IV. 453, 454, 468
Molinos, Miguel de, I. 220, 291
Monaco, A. Grimaldi, Duke de Valentinois, afterwards Prince de, II. 324
— Louis Grimaldi, Prince of, I. 91, 155, 216, 217, 341, 394, 424, 432, 466.—II. 318, 324
Mondonville, J. Juilard, Mme. de, I. 363
"Monseigneur," *see* Louis, Dauphin of France
— Historical explanation of the title, III. 256, 257
"Monsieur," *see* Orleans, Philip. Duke of
— Historical explanation of the title, III. 255
"M. le Duc," *see* Bourbon, Duke of
— Historical explanation of the title, III. 255
"M. le Grand," *see* Armagnac, Count d'
"M. le Premier," *see* Beringhen, M. de and Fontainemartel, Count de
"M. le Prince," *see* Condé, Prince de
— Historical explanation of the title.—III. 254, 255
Montal, Charles de Montsaulin, Count de, I. 30, 140
Montalais, Julie de Bourbon, Mlle. de, I. 155
Montalegre, Marquis de, VI. 366
Montataire, II. 441, 442
Montauban, de, IV. 131, 190, 432, 498
Montausier, Julie-Lucine d'Angennas, Marquise de Rambouillet, Mme. de, I. 48.—III. 191
— Marquis de, III. 214.—IV. 148, 150, 156, 178.—V. 23
Montbazon, Charles de Rohan, Duke de, I. 97.—II. 167, 250.—III. 329, 330.—IV. 394.—V. 277
— Duchess de, I. 78.—II. 155, 160.—III. 261, 330, 419.—IV. 478
Montbron, François, Count of, I. 24, 25.—III. 44
Montchevreuil, Henri de, Marquis of, I. 57, 61, 466.—V. 291
— M. Boucher d'Orsay, Mme. de, I. 27, 250.—II. 231.—V. 300, 323
Monteillano, Louise de Gondy Sarminto, Duchess of, II. 177, 268.—VI. 392, 393, 400, 412, 413
Monteleone, VI. 59, 196
Montespan, Mme. de, Françoise-Athenais de Rochechouart, Marquise de, I. xii, 4, 12, 26, 31, 49, 68, 100, 108, 188, 189, 194, 209–212, 248, 270, 275, 281, 362, 402, 444, 534 — II. 39, 48, 57, 189, 190, 304, 413, 493–501, 506, 507.—III. 19, 33, 34, 137, 162, 194, 206, 210, 264, 265, 465.—IV. 31, 60, 524.—V. 138, 141, 256, 281, 283–286, 288–291, 299, 300, 410.—VI. 283, 502–504, 506, 508
— L. H., Marquis de, I. 194, 534.—II. 168, 493, 495.—IV. 101, 102.—V. 283, 284, 288
Montesquiou, Antoine, III. 347
— Duke de and Marshal, *see* Artignan, P. de Montesquiou, de
Montfort, L. de Brisseau, Chevalier de, I. 65
— Duke of, *see* Luynes, H. C. d'Albert, Duke de
— Louis de Brisseau, Marquis de, Major of Royal-Roussillon regiment, I. 52, 61, 65, 128, 189, 493, 534
Montgaillard, Bishop of St. Pons, IV. 473, 474
Montgeorges, Captain, I. 396
Montgon, J. F. Cordebœuf de Beauverger, Count de, I. 175, 195.—II. 24–26, 400
— L. Sublat d'Heudicourt, Mme. de, I. 182, 194, 195.—II. 415.—III. 252.—IV. 37
Montjeu, G. J. de Castille, Marquis de, II. 264, 265
— Mlle. de, II. 264–266
Montmorency, Henri, Duke de, II. 483, 485
Montpensier, Mlle. de, "La Grande Mademoiselle," I. 20, 31–33
— Mlle. de, afterwards Princess of the Asturias, VI. 327, 338, 342, 343, 350, 367–369, 388, 389, 392–396, 398–402, 411–415, 422, 438, 445
Montrevel, Jacques-Marie, de la Baume, Count de, and Marshal, I. 61, 136, 533.—II. 95, 106, 107, 113, 114, 170, 171, 238.—III. 292, 294, 322, 420.—IV. 216, 218, 219, 420–423.—V. 427, 428
Montsoreau, Louis de Bouschet, Count de, afterwards Marquis de Sauches, II. 331
Moreau, Denis, *Valet-de-chambre* to the Duke of Burgundy, I. 143.—III. 24, 25.—IV. 335
Moret, Abbé (Jean), I. 120
Morin, Jacques, I. 189.—VI. 284
Morstein, J. A., Count de, I. 65
— M. T. d'Albert de Luynes, Mme. de, I. 145
— M. A. Count de, Grand-Treasurer of Poland, I. 205
Mortagne, V. 469
Mortemart, Louis de Rochechouart, Duke de, I. 41, 42, 48, 76, 128.—II. 57, 410.—III. 210
— — — Duke de, II. 151, 152, 302.—III. 203–206, 448.—IV. 61, 67, 68, 105, 108, 109, 205.—V. 21, 33, 42, 445.—VI. 9, 188, 189, 408, 409
— M. A. Colbert, Duchess de, II. 151.—III. 37, 38, 448.—V. 21.—VI. 189
— Mlle. de, *see* Cani, Marquise de
— Marie-Anne Colbert, Duchess de, I. 128, 145.—II. 151, 347.—III. 448.—VI. 188, 189
Morville, C. B. Fleurian, Count de, II. 197
Mothe, Count de la, II. 367.—III. 114, 157, 158, 184, 190.—IV. 350
— Maréchale, de la, I. 276, 277.—II. 117, 170, 367.—III. 114, 191.—V. 324
Motte-d'Ayran, La, IV. 218, 219
Motteville, II. 309
— Mme. de, V. 104.—VI. 69
Mouchy, Mme. de, IV. 405.—V. 147, 415.—VI. 213–215, 225
Moussy, Mme. de, II. 444
Munster, Bishop of, *see* Metternich, Baron
Murcé, II. 400
Murcia, Belluga, L. A., Bishop of

Nain, Le, III. 476
Nancré, II. 254, 382, 397, 399, 401, 403.—III. 47, 429.—VI. 72
— Marie-Anne de la Bazonière, Mme. de, II. 382–401, 402
Nangis, L. A. de Brichanteau, Marquis de, I. 186.—II. 165, 167, 214–218, 314, 351, 352, 466.—III. 114, 135, 176, 345.—IV. 63, 337. VI. 517
Nanon, *see* Balbien, Mlle.
Nantes, Bishop of, VI. 259, 260

Narbonne, Archbishop of, *see* Bonzi, Cardinal
Nassau, Prince of, IV. 279
Navailles, P. de Montault, Duke de, I. 399–401.—III. 88
— Duke de, III. 432
— S. de Beaudéan, Duchess de, I. 398–401.—II. 205.—III. 88. 89
Nemours, Charles Amédée de Savoy, Duke de, I. 20, 21.—V. 53
— M. de B. de Miramion, Duchess de, I. 103, 117, 153, 323, 337, 353, 397.—II. 165, 507–511.—III. 215, 447.—IV. 48.—V. 53
Nesmond, F. T. de, Bishop of Bayeux, and later Archbishop of Alby, II. 423.—IV. 214, 215.—V. 111–113, 182
— M. de Beauharnais de Maramion, Mme. de, I. 166
Neufchâtel, Louis-Henri, Prince de, and Count de Soissons, I. 118, 482
Neuillan, C. de Beaudéau Parabère, Count de, I. 398
— Mme. de, II. 435.—IV. 404.—V. 287
Nevers, P. J. Mazarin Mancini, Duke de, II. 285, 446, 447.—IV. 506.—VI. 449
Nimeguen, peace of, I. xi
Nîmes, Bishop of, *see* Fléchier, La Parisière
Noailles, E. J., Count de, II. 1
— Anne-Jules, Marshal, Duke de, I. 29, 30, 33, 65, 105, 116, 117, 132, 133, 145, 149, 180, 181, 207, 276, 278, 280–282, 331, 332, 454, 457, 502, 510, 512.—II. 95, 110, 111, 123, 166, 168, 169, 420.—III. 73, 161–163, IV. 157, 302.—V. 25, 37, 226
— A. M. de, Duke de (for previous references, *see* Ayen, A. M. de Noailles, Count d'), II. 360, 372–374, 418, 420, 424, 449.—III. 163, 231, 429, 430.—IV. 69, 80, 112, 201, 213, 291–303, 313, 317, 348, 349, 356, 366, 449, 520–522.—V. 15, 63–66, 115, 116, 160, 162–165, 173, 179, 180, 200, 207–209, 220–232, 234–236, 300, 338, 352, 353, 355, 358, 360, 363, 370–376, 392, 397, 399, 400, 402, 421–426, 429–431, 433, 436, 444, 448, 453, 454, 458, 468, 470, 471, 476–478, 491, 492, 503–505, 517, 520.—VI. 1, 2, 5–7, 20–23, 30, 31, 34, 35, 38, 44, 52, 57, 65, 136, 138, 142, 144, 148, 152, 216, 251, 258, 270, 300, 426, 427, 444, 445, 450–452, 482, 483, 518, 520, 525, 526
— F. C. A. de Daubigné, Duchess de, II. 415, 418—IV. 47
— L. A., Abbé de, afterwards Bishop of Châlons and Archbishop of Paris, and Cardinal, I. 149, 217, 221, 224, 226, 228, 259, 275, 278, 280, 281, 291, 308, 310, 313, 332, 336, 337, 343, 345, 411, 423, 429, 430, 445, 472, 474, 512.—II. 15, 86, 110, 111, 113, 250, 332, 333, 335–337, 389.—III. 96, 163, 194, 202, 362–364.—IV. 39, 59, 69, 119–123, 214–216, 270, 271, 285, 286, 299, 302–306, 338, 339, 348, 375, 376, 452–454, 459.—V. 25, 30, 31, 43, 62, 82, 84, 170, 171, 180, 226, 230, 231, 233–236, 242–244, 319, 343, 352–354, 375, 422, 423, 438–441, 456, 471, 473, 477–480, 482.—VI. 11, 33, 34, 43–45, 51, 68, 214, 215, 257, 447, 483
— L. Boyer, Maréchale, Duchess of, I. 229, 275, 276, 282, 331, 388, 467.—II. 112, 123, 155, 156, 255, 303, 423.—III. 36, 43, 162, 249, 250.—IV. 49, 313, 411.—V. 25, 180.—VI. 57, 362, 483
Nocé, V. 193, 391, 416, 429.—VI. 427
Noël, Father, IV. 319
Nogaret, M. M. A. de Gontaut-Biron, Mme. de, I. 182, 190, 191, 193, 286.—II. 217, 218, 353, 354, 466.—III. 126, 127, 132, 156, 323, 414, 470.—IV. 33, 153, 177, 192, 258, 323, 324
Nointel, IV. 81
Noirmonstier, A. F., Duke de, I. 406.—II. 275, 276.—V. 100.—VI. 252–254
Notre Andre, De, I. 431, 432.—III. 207.—VI 421
Noue, La, III. 433
Novion, First-President, II. 60–62.—V. 61, 62
Noyan, de, VI. 20
Noyon, Bishop of, *see* Clermont-Tonnere; Bignon; Aubigny
Nyert, Francois-Lois de, I. 41, 387.—III. 325, 415
— Pierre de, I. 41, 42.—III. 325.—VI. 501, 502

O', M. and Mme. d', *see* Villars, Marquis and Marquise de
Odeschalchi, Don Livio, I. 271.—V. 54
Oppède, Chevalier d', VI. 10
Orange, Prince of, *see* William III, King of England
Order of the Holy Ghost, Officers of, II. 130, 131
Orkney, George Hamilton, 1st Earl of, II. 193
Orleans, Anne-Marie-Louise d', Duchess of Montpensier, "La Grande Mademoiselle," I. 20.—II. 167, 496, 497.—III. 34
— Bishop of, *see* Coislin, Cardinal; Peletier, M. le
— Chevalier de, III. 424
— Elizabeth Charlotte of Bavaria, Duchess of, "Madame," I. 13–19, 26, 31, 201, 207, 237, 258, 260, 263, 266, 277, 296, 314–317, 354, 389–391, 440, 456, 457, 480, 482, 483, 487, 492, 494, 495, 516–519, 522.—II. 30–32, 117, 166, 167, 354, 371, 406, 414, 451, 454, 457, 488, 496, 497.—III. 15, 29, 30, 58, 59, 135, 166, 413, 414, 459.—IV. 23, 26, 27, 30, 35, 46, 51, 137, 152, 170, 173, 261, 272, 311, 323–325, 328, 334, 365, 471, 496, 497, 505.—V. 50, 94, 101, 132, 147–149, 159, 238, 242, 245, 255, 291, 295, 300, 307, 311, 347, 350, 406, 416, 438.—VI. 37, 68, 177, 178, 223, 231, 318, 480, 482
— — — daughter of Philip I, Duke of Orleans, called "Mademoiselle," I, 20, 33, 105, 232, 257, 270, 314–316. Afterwards Duchess of Lorraine, *q.v.*
— Marie-Louise-Elisabeth d', daughter of Philip II, Duke of Orleans, called "Mademoiselle," afterwards Duchess of Berry. III. 396, 455, 457, 460–462, 498–504, 506–509, 512, 513.—IV. 1, 2, 5, 7–9 13, 16–18, 21, 23, 25–27, 29, 30, 44, 46, 50. For later references *see* Berry, Duchess of
— Françoise, Marie, Duchess of (for earlier references *see* Chartres, Duchess of), I. 518.—II. 45, 46, 130, 167, 230, 232, 253, 254, 378, 379, 406, 451, 457, 496, 500, 507.—III. 13, 46, 47, 135, 137, 313, 383, 387, 393–395, 411–413, 427–430, 434–436, 454–457, 459–462, 472, 498–504, 506, 508, 510, 512–516, 518.—IV. 1–4, 7–21, 23–30, 33, 36, 38, 41, 42, 49, 50, 52, 72, 131, 132, 137, 138, 142, 159–161, 171, 173, 175, 176, 181, 182, 185, 189, 258, 261–265, 272, 290, 294, 299, 300, 302, 311, 325, 366–370, 372, 376, 379, 442–446, 500, 504, 523.—V. 15, 39, 50, 101, 107–109, 119, 124, 136, 138–146, 148–154, 201, 202, 207, 210, 226, 240, 245, 248–250, 330, 333, 347, 386, 387, 406, 410, 411, 416, 459, 483, 491, 495.—VI. 7, 8, 41, 58, 68, 89, 157, 171, 173–181, 183, 213, 223, 226, 227, 231, 318, 401, 468, 469, 485, 491, 492, 518, 519, 521, 525
— Gaston, J. B., Duke of, I. 20, 31, 37, 42, 78, 315, 434.—III. 330.—V. 443.—VI. 470
— Henrietta, Duchess of, I. 519–521.—III. 166.—IV. 352.—V. 22

Orleans, Philip I, Duke of, "Monsieur," I. xiv–xvi, 2, 13–20, 24, 31–33, 35, 124, 152, 153, 184, 185, 186, 200, 201, 237, 258, 270, 275, 277, 286, 287, 292–294, 296, 314–317, 329, 344, 354, 385, 386, 390, 391, 408, 453, 456, 457, 480–482, 486–498, 503, 519–522.—II. 1, 28, 45, 46, 117, 234, 277, 451, 496, 497.—III. 58, 59, 82, 83, 166, 311, 328.—IV. 92, 152, 311, 325, 351, 365, 368, 505.—V. 123, 128, 129, 131, 139, 158, 159, 256, 257, 273, 291, 302, 311, 321, 324, 326, 350.—VI. 318
— Philip II, Duke of, (for earlier references *see* Chartres, Duke of), I. 518.—II. 40, 45–47, 95, 98, 130, 196, 202, 226, 253, 254, 258, 311, 347, 370, 371, 378–386, 389–404, 424, 426, 451–458, 463.—III. 4, 12–14, 30, 31, 41, 46–48, 103–105, 109, 121, 137, 172, 177, 200, 217, 231, 253, 297, 300, 301, 307–319, 323, 368, 371, 375–378, 380–415, 422–426, 428–434, 454–457, 459–462, 498–501, 506–509, 512–519.—IV, 1, 3, 7, 9–21, 23–30, 32–34, 36, 38–43, 49, 50, 52, 53, 72, 131, 137, 138, 155, 159–161, 166, 173, 175, 176, 179, 181, 216, 228, 259–267, 272, 294, 298–300, 302, 311, 325, 329, 349, 353, 359–372, 376–381, 385, 392, 403, 404, 406, 419, 425, 428–431, 443–446, 496, 500, 501, 504, 518–520, 523, 525, 529.—V. 1, 3–6, 13–16, 27, 37–39, 49–51, 75, 77, 82, 94, 99–103, 106–109, 116, 118–154, 156, 158–161, 165, 205, 207, 209, 214–217, 220, 221, 226–231, 237, 238, 240, 241, 244–246, 248–250, 314, 315, 317, 332–360, 367, 368, 370–372, 374, 377–380, 382–393, 395–404, 406–408, 412, 413, 415–422, 424–433, 435–438, 442–448, 450–454, 456–459, 462–468, 470–483, 485–515, 517–521.—VI. 1, 3–10, 12–16, 18–50, 53, 54, 56, 58, 61–77, 79, 81–115, 117–134, 136–164, 168, 170–180, 183, 184, 186–189, 191–215, 221–231, 233, 235, 240–247, 249–262, 264–282, 285, 289, 290, 292–307, 309–327, 334–337, 343, 345, 347, 348, 350, 351, 353, 359, 365, 368, 371, 372, 387, 388, 400–405, 407, 408, 411, 414, 425–428, 431, 435, 437, 441, 444–447, 450–478, 480–486, 489, 491, 493–498, 512, 516–526, 528
Ormond, James Butler, Duke of, I. 62.—II. 52.—V. 388, 466
Orondates, *see* Villars, Marquis de
Orry, Jan, II. 85, 86, 137, 148, 174–176, 181, 205, 260, 261, 377, 378.—V. 92
Osnabruck, Bishop of, *see* Lorraine, C. J. A. I.
Ossona, F. Pacheco y Tellez Giron, Duke of, I. 469.—VI. 335, 368, 436
Ossy, Mme. de, *see* Villefort, Mme. de
Ottoboni, Pietro, Cardinal, II. 320.—III. 445
Outrelaise, Mlle. M., d', I. 270, 347.—II. 417
Overkerke, Lieutenant of Dutch Guards, I. 140
Oxford, R. Harley, Earl of, II. 188, 444.—IV. 124

Pallavicin, III. 344
Panache, Madame, I. 219
Parabère, V. 410
— Mme. de, V. 410, 418.—VI. 262
Paris, Archbishop of, *see* Harlay ; Noailles
Parisière, La, Bishop of Nîmes, V. 85
Parma, Bishop of, II. 342
— Duchess of, VI. 379
— Francis II., Duke of, II. 342, 343.—III. 122.—IV. 484.—V. 41.—VI. 379, 405, 406
— Prince of, I. 265
— Princess of, IV. 504.—V. 40–42. For later references *see* Spain, Queen of, second wife of Philip V
Pascal, Blaise, III. 360, 361
Patay, General, II. 462
Paul III, Pope, II. 111
Paul V, Pope, III. 358
Payen, Paul, President, II. 233
Pecquet, VI. 337, 340, 437
Peletier, Michel le, Bishop of Angers and afterwards of Orleans, II. 330
Pelletier-de Sousi (M. Cl. Regency), VI. 143, 144, 248
— C., Marquis de, I. 179, 244, 292, 366, 420, 426, 427, 501.—II. 330, 445, 446.—III. 43, 243, 362, 408.—IV. 306
— — — de M. Intendant of Flanders, I. 292, 364.—II. 153.—III. 327.—V. 505
Pelot, M. Colbert, Mme., I. 71, 72
Penterieder, VI. 59
Pepys, Samuel, I. vii
Perchoir, du, a fortune-teller, I. 11
Peri, II. 283, 360
Permillac, M., I. 342
Persia, Ambassador from, V. 93–95, 211, 212
Perth, James Drummond, 4th Earl and 1st titular Duke of, I. 476.—II. 259.—III. 51, 53–55
Pertuis, A. C. de, II. 84
Peter I, Czar of Muscovy, V. 507–515.—VI. 60
Peterborough and Monmouth, Charles Mordaunt, Earl of, IV. 471.—V. 1, 2
Pezé, VI. 463
Phélypeaux, J. A., Bishop of Lodève, II. 186
— Jérôme, *see* Maurepas, Count de
— R. B., II. 132, 142.—V. 516
Philip II, King of Spain, VI. 374, 375
Philip III, King of Spain, VI. 373
Philip IV, King of Spain, I. x, 45, 46, 168, 338
— V, King of Spain, I. 446, 447, 451–458, 469, 485, 503, 506, 507, 522, 524–527, 529, 530.—II. 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 27, 34, 39, 40, 42, 51.—II. 95, 132–136, 138, 148, 149, 175–177, 219, 242, 243, 248, 255, 268–270, 274, 279, 301, 360, 372–375, 458, 461, 472.—III. 24, 168, 171, 241, 272, 298, 299, 309–318, 335, 499, 505.—IV, 49, 72–79, 163, 184, 187, 254, 292, 357, 381, 390, 391, 411, 412, 427, 476, 477, 481–485, 504, 509, 525.—V. 40, 42, 48, 49, 86–92, 99, 100, 102, 364, 389, 392, 447–450, 455, 475, 480, 481.—VI. 20, 59, 82, 70, 88, 194, 195, 199, 206, 209, 228, 241, 242, 247, 254, 262, 263, 297, 309–311, 324, 325, 329, 330, 332, 337, 338, 340–343, 346–353, 355–369, 371–401, 403–410, 412–414, 416, 422–424, 427–440, 443, 445–447, 476, 485
Piedmont, Prince of, IV. 471.—VI. 7–9, 89, 230, 231
Pimentel, VI. 419, 420
Pincy-Luxembourg, H. L. d'Albert, Duke de, I. 89,,103
— Marguerite Charlotte de Luxembourg, Duchess de, I. 80
Piré, de, VI. 20, 24
Pleinœuf, Mme., VI. 7, 8
— VI. 7, 8, 230, 231
Plessis-Bellièvre, Mme. de, II. 140, 262
Plosco, Bishop of, I. 237
Pointis, J. B. L. Desteau, Baron de, I. 239.—II. 152, 204, 269.—IV. 374
Poirier, Physician to Louis XV, V. 357.—VI. 49, 50
Portiers, Bishop of, *see* Saillant, F. I. de Baglion de
Poland, King of, *see* Frederick Augustus
— Marie, Queen-Dowager of, I. 206, 207, 233, 234, 237, 257.—II. 511–513.—IV. 513, 514
Polignac, V. 489
— M., Abbé de, and Cardinal, I. 206, 233, 234, 237–239.—II. 312–316, 327, 351, 354.—III. 133, 168, 170, 441–444.—IV. 80, 236, 241, 289, 412, 413, 440, 471.—V. 43—VI. 48, 49

Pomereu, A. R. de, I. 362–364.—V. 452
Pompadour, Mme. de, III. 88, 89.—IV. 404, 405, 495
— M. de, III. 88, 89.—IV. 404.—V. 48, 49, 92.—VI. 199, 228
— Mlle. Marie de, Marquise de Saint-Luo, I. 48
Pomponne, H. O., Abbé de, I. 380.—II. 227.—III. 446.—V. 267
— S. A., Marquis de, I. 179, 205, 244, 279, 296, 322, 358, 359, 376–380.—II. 154.—III. 280.—IV. 196
Pons, de, V. 483–485
Pontcarré, First-President of Parliament of Rouen, VI. 193
Pontchartrain, Jérôme Phélypeaux, Count de, *see* Maurepas
— Louis Phélypeaux, Count de, Chancellor, I. xiii, xiv, 9, 69, 73, 74, 85, 112, 114, 117, 125, 174, 203, 204, 213, 217, 218, 245, 303–305, 312, 313, 320, 351, 359, 360, 362, 364–369, 395, 422, 427, 449–451, 470, 478, 502.—II. 7, 8, 11, 19, 44, 86, 87, 90, 97, 99, 152, 154, 155, 158, 162, 173, 207, 208, 229, 231, 235, 236, 244, 245, 287, 302, 309, 310, 321, 322, 336, 337, 344, 431, 433, 436, 439, 440, 485.—III. 56, 93, 95, 99, 101, 102, 140, 167, 232, 238, 239, 277, 281, 292, 295, 305, 306, 316–321, 326, 353, 362, 369–371, 373, 376, 379, 384, 413, 414, 421, 431, 432.—IV. 3, 31, 33, 84, 91, 130, 131, 151, 194–196, 198, 213, 218, 220, 222–224, 227, 230, 231, 233, 235, 238, 239, 253, 254, 259, 274–279, 287, 288, 294, 371, 424–426, 447, 475, 476, 478–480, 486–489, 509–512.—V. 24, 34, 113, 304, 356, 366, 378–380, 434.—VI. 44
— M. de Maurepas, Countess de, I. 204, 320, 334, 368, 374, 406.—III. 101, 102, 321.—IV. 47, 426, 447, 486–489.—V. 32
— Verderonne, Countess de, IV. 447
Pope, The, *see* Innocent XI, Innocent XII, and Clement XI
Popoli, Duke de, VI. 20, 345
Portail, Antoine, Advocate-General, I. 270, 465.—VI. 80
Porte, A. H. de Budos, Marquis de, I. 45
— Mlle. M. F. de, I. 45.—II. 484–486
Porte-Vèzins, Marquise de la, III. 413
Portland, William Bentinck, 1st Earl of, I. 140, 240, 241, 245, 264–267.—IV. 473
Portocarrero, Abbé, VI. 196, 197
— L. E. F. B., Cardinal I. 446, 447, 522.—II. 134, 136, 138, 375
Portsmouth, Louise de la Kérouaille, Duchess of, II. 85, 153.—V. 125.—VI. 56
Portugal, Pedro II, King of, II. 132, 456.—III. 27, 28
Poulinier, Father, III. 165
Powis, Lord, IV. 417
Pozzobuono, Colonel, II. 248
Pracomtal, Armand, Marquis de, II. 145
Praslin, G. J. B. de Choiseul d'Hostel, I. 65.—II. 24, 27, 284
Pretender, The, J. F. E. Stuart, *see* James III
Prié, Mme. de, III. 4, 5.—VI. 230, 319, 486, 500
— Marquis de, III. 241.—IV. 350
Proustière, J. G., Abbé de la, I. 372.—III. 167
Pucelle, Abbé, V. 354
Purnon, I. 521, 522
Puy, du, Captain, I. 59, 145
Puyguilhem, Marquis de, *see* Lausun, Duke de
Puylaurens, A. de l'Age de, Duke de, I. 37
Puyrobert, F. G. Seigneur de, I. 52, 61, 65.—VI. 336
Puységur, J. F. de Chastinet Marquis de, I. 54, 118, 119.—II. 148, 173–175, 181, 205, 372.—III. 1, 2, 63, 74, 75, 109, 111, 113.—VI. 47
Puysieux, C. d'Estampes, Velençay, Mme., II. 227, 228
— R. B., Marquis de, I. 353.—II. 165, 227–229, 237, 511.—V. 45

Quentin, Mme., IV. 310
Quesnel, P. Father, I. 149.—II. 122, 123, 336, 337.—IV. 120–122, 203, 285, 286, 453, 454.—V. 85
Queue, B. de Prez, Baron de la, II. 182, 183
Quintin, Guy de Durfort, Duke de, II. 88, 89
— Mlle. G. de, I. 127, 129, afterwards Duchess de Lausun, *q.v.*
Quoadt, Brigadier, I. 61

Rabutin, J. C. de, II. 271
Racine, Jean I, I. 347, 348
Radziewski, Michael, Cardinal, I. 233, 235, 238
Radzivil, Prince Charles Stanislaus, I. 235
— Prince Jacob, II. 511
Ragotzi, F. L., Prince, I. 486.—II. 141, 142, 271.—IV. 409–411
Rambure, III. 52, 53
Rancé, Armand le Bouthellier de, Abbot of La Trappe, I. 78, 79, 107, 198–200, 283–286, 306–313, 366, 445, 473, 474.—V. 47, 48.—VI. 187
— Chevalier de, VI. 187
Rantzau, J. A., Count de, I. 430
Rasilly, Gabriel, Marquis de, III. 71.—IV. 93
Ratabon, Bishop of Ypres, and afterwards of Viviers, IV. 434
Ravignan, IV. 64, 283, 284
Rebours, A. le, I. 372.—II. 188
Reims, Archbishop of, *see* Tellier, le; Mailly, F. de
Reineville, M., Lieutenant of Bodyguard, I. 342
Relingue, F. Count de, II. 204
Remiremont, Mme. de, *see* Lislebonne, Mlle. de
Rémond, V. 391.—VI. 403
Renault, Bernard, II. 52, 270.—III. 270
— III. 309, 310, 312, 314.—IV. 294, 300.—V. 99, 100.—VI. 25
Renel, Marquis de, V. 260
Retz, Cardinal de, III. 483.—VI. 69, 242
— J. de Gondi, Cardinal de, I. 433.—II. 474
— Marshal, Duke de, II. 508
Revel, C. A. de Brogiie, Count de, II. 22, 24, 25, 27
Reynee, G. N. de la, Lieutenant of Police at Paris, I. 214, 283, 362, 364.—V. 451
Reynold, V. 192
Richebourg, Intendant at Rouen, III. 327.—IV. 75
Richelieu, A. J. de Vignerot, Duke de, I. 90–92, 94, 95, 188.—II. 234–236.—IV. 112, 492, 493.—V. 396, 412.—VI. 212, 213, 228, 255, 284
— A. J. du Plessis, Cardinal Duke de, I. 36, 39–43, 94, 95, 398, 434.—II. 235.—V. 167.—VI. 473
— A. P. de Fore de Vizean, Duchess de, I. 163, 187, 277, 291.—II
— L. A. J. du Plessia Wingerod, Marquis de, III. 235, 236
— Marquise de, III. 248, 249
Ricouart, V. 516
Rieux, P. H., Count de, III. 92.—V. 483, 484, 489.—VI. 24
Riglet, Father, V. 415.—VI. 224
Rignault (Rigaud), portrait painter, I. 198–200
Rinini, Abbé de, I. 374
Rion, V. 413–416, 444.—VI. 213–215, 222, 227
Riparfonds, E. G. de, I. 91
Risburg, Mme. de, V. 364–366
— M. de, V. 364–366
— Mlle. de, V. 364, 365

Rivaroles, J. P. de St. M. d'Agliè, Marquis de, II. 183
Rivas, Marquis de, *see* Ubilla, A. B.
Robecque, Princess de, VI. 362, 363
Robinet, Father, IV. 483, 485.—V. 99
Roche, La, VI. 349
Rochechouart, G. de Sève, Bishop of Arras, I. 345
— J. B., Count de, II. 347
— M. M. Colbert de Blainville, Countess of, II. 347
— Mlle. de, VI. 216
Rochefort-Alloigny, H. L., Marshal, I. 21, 22, 126.—V. 285, 286
— — de Laval, Maréchal de, I. 20–23, 185, 187, 251, 323, 339.—II. 214, 215, 304.—IV. 36, 137.—V. 267, 285.—VI. 175, 177, 178
Rochefort, L. P. A. d'Aloigny, Marquis de, I. 188
— La, IV. 94
Rochefoucauld, Charles, Abbé de la, I. 276.—III. 170
— 8th Duke of, IV. 475, 478–480.—V. 63, 65, 155, 159, 217, 227, 228, 260, 336, 337, 342, 374.—VI. 49, 160, 161, 280
— François, 7th Duke de la, I. 30, 31, 49, 50, 88, 90, 91, 94, 98, 150, 155, 167, 169–171, 190, 220, 227, 230–232, 261, 267, 275, 276, 282, 326, 332, 344, 351, 362.—II. 7, 18, 41, 74, 112, 124, 125, 169, 236, 408, 445.—III. 34, 44, 49, 52, 62, 63, 170, 178, 263–268, 276, 480, 517.—IV. 177, 178, 185, 317, 408, 449, 450, 471–475, 497.—V. 356
— François, Duke de la, I. 276.—II. 124, 228
— J. C. du Plessis-Liancourt, Duchess de la, I. 256
Rocheguyon, Abbé de, IV. 407–409
— François, Duke de, II. 112.—III. 178, 222, 223, 295, 306, 383, 385, 479.—IV. 103, 104, 106, 185, 192, 407–409, 449, 450
— M. C. le Tellier, Duchess de la, I. 104
Rochester, Laurence Hyde, Earl of, II. 38
Roche-sur-Yon, Mlle. de la, VI. 318
Rodes, II. 418
Rodez, Bishop of, *see* Lusignan
Rodrigo, Don Joseph, VI. 357, 358
Rohan, Cardinal de, *see* Soubise, Abbé de
— H. M. de Rohan-Soubise, Prince de, II. 409.—IV. 63, 190, 191, 426.—V. 124, 422, 439–441.—VI. 340, 370, 388, 389, 458, 463
— Louis Chabot, Duke de, I. 90, 91, 100, 120, 207, 252, 292, 296, 326–328, 341, 415.—II. 442.—III. 31, 93, 94, 96, 203
— M. E. du B. C. G. de Vardas, Duchess de, I. 330–334, 391, 402.—II. 156, 164.—III. 93, 96
— Princesse de, III. 377
Roland, Pierre Laport, called, II. 184
Romans, King of the, *see* Joseph I
Rongère, H. de Quatrebras, Marquis de, II. 152
Rooke, Admiral Sir George I. 64.—II. 204
Roquelaure, G. J. B. A., Duke de, I. 121–123.—II. 280, 302, 303, 346.—III. 91, 96, 475.—V. 286
— M. L. de Montmorency-Laval, Duchess de, I. 122, 250.—II. 346.—III. 91–96.—IV. 31, 48.—V. 286
Roquette, G. de, Bishop of Autun, II. 422, 423
Rose (d'Almagnac), known as Sister, I. 472–474.—V. 30
— Conrad, Marquis de, Lieutenant-Colonel, I. 302.—II. 288.—III. 246
— Toussaint, Secretary to King's Cabinet, I. 463–466
Rosel, A. F. de Rosel, Chevalier de, I. 67.—II. 388.—III. 114
Rosen, Conrad, Marquis de, II. 41, 95, 102, 103, 238
Roucy, C. F. d'Arpajon, Countess de, I. 182, 187, 190, 251, 279, 389.—II. 28, 32, 156, 157.—III. 101, 102, 178, 204.—IV. 208, 314.—V. 380, 381, 384–387
— F. de la Rochefoucauld de Roye, Count de, I. 141, 218, 303.—II. 195, 400, 448.—III. 232, 249, 477–479.—IV. 192, 413.—V. 380–388
Rouen, Archbishop of, *see* Colbert, Aubigny, Besons A. B. de
— Parliament of, II. 305–311
Rouillé, III. 232, 240.—V. 430
— du Coudray, H., I. 501, 502.—II. 139.—III. 162
Roure, L. P. S. de Grimouard, Count de, I. 105
— M. A. L. du Caumont, Marquise de, I. 105, 129, 185, 187, 190.—II. 32
Rouvroy, J. B., called Marquise de, III. 58–61
— Mademoiselles, III. 58, 59
Rovere, Francis della, *see* Sixtus IV, Pope
Royan, Mlle. M. de la Trémouille, Marquis de, I. 125, 128, 129, 157, 442
Roye, Chevalier de, I. 141.—III. 160.—IV. 314.—VI. 187
— F. C. de la Rochefoucauld, Count de, I. 141, 190, 219, 220
— I. de Durfort Duras, Countess de, I. 219, 220.—II. 72, 73
Rubentel, D. L. de, Lieutenant-General, I. 57, 208, 209
Rue, Charles de la, Father, I. 224, 225, 426.—III. 507.—IV. 319, 375, 377, 496, 497
Ruffec, A. J. de Rouvroy de Saint-Simon, Marquis de, son of the author, I. 357.—V. 133, 134, 234.—VI. 311, 312, 328, 335, 337, 340, 347, 359, 387, 447, 517
Rupelmonde, M. P. J. de Recourt, Count de, II. 251, 252
Ruvigny, Henri II. de Marone, Marquis de, I. 62, 215, 216.—II. 300, 441, 453, 457
Ryswick, Peace of, I. 239–241, 257, 264, 265, 267, 314, 363, 528.—II. 16, 53

Sabran, Mme. de, VI. 43
Saillant, Abbé de, V. 457
— F. J. de Baglion de, Bishop of Poitiers, I. 268
— J. P. d'Estaing, Count de, I. 169.—VI. 213, 228
Sainctot, N., I. 259, 260, 320
St. Aignan, Abbé de, Bishop of Beauvais, IV. 437.—V. 19, 31
Saint-Aignan, P. de Beauvilliers, Duke de, I. 500.—II. 94, 410, 416, 511.—III. 448.—IV. 105, 106, 429, 431.—V. 18, 19, 23, 42, 87, 90, 92, 448, 449.—VI. 193, 199, 203, 204, 329–331, 408–410
— — Duchess de, II. 410.—V. 18, 191.—VI. 204
— — Mlle. de, Abbess of La Joie, I. 499, 500
St. Albans, C. Beauclerk, 1st Duke of, I. 264
St. Albin, Abbé d', V. 408
St. Amant, II. 220
St. Chaumant, A. J. Mitte de Chevrières, Marquis de, I. 217
St. Contest, IV. 228.—V. 457.—VI. 37–40
St. Evremont, Charles Marguetel de Saint-Denis, I. 361.—II. 140, 141
Saint-Frémont, J. F. Ravend, Marquis de, I. 508
Saint-George, Chevalier de, *see* James III, pretender to the throne of England
Saint-Georges, Claude de, successively Archbishop of Tours and of Lyons, I. 68
Saint-Géran, F. M. C. de Warignes, Countess de, I. 208, 209, 322, 341.—III. 373.—IV. 47, 492, 493.—VI. 238

Saint-Hérem, F. G. de Montmorency, Marquis de, I. 155, 511.—V. 224, 260
— Mme. de, I. 511
Saint-Hermine, Mlle., *see* Mailly, Countess de
St. Hilaire, V. 192
Saint-Laurent, Nicolas François Parisot de, I. 14, 15.—V. 127, 129.—VI. 471
Saint-Léger, II. 396
Saint-Louis, L. de Loreux, Seigneur de, I. 198, 307, 309, 311, 473.—III. 98.—IV. 125.—V. 47, 48
Saint-Luc, L. d'Espianoy, Abbé de, I. 322
— — Maric de, Pompadour, *see* Pompadour, Mlle. de
Saint-Mars, III. 163
Saint-Mégrin, J. de Stuer de Camsade, Marquis de, I. 46
St. Nectaire, Henri, Marquis de, II. 284, 392
St. Omer, Bishop of, *see* Valbelle, L. A. de
Saint-Paul, C. P. d'Orleans, Count of, I. 205, 206.—II. 300, 510, 512
Saint-Peter, J. de Constelier, Marquis de, III. 7
Saint-Pierre, II. 253, 254, 270, 378, 408.—V. 141, 150
St. Pons, Bishop of, *see* Montgaillard
Saint-Pouenge, G. Colbert, Marquis de, I. 29, 64, 407.—III. 207
St. Ruth, III. 483
Saint-Sernein, II. 348
Saint-Simon, Abbé de, VI. 328, 335, 340, 347, 387, 429, 443, 449
— Charlotte de l'Aubépine, the Duchess of, mother of the author, I. 4, 34, 48, 49, 74, 92, 125, 127–129, 442.—II. 311, 498.—III. 100.—V. 366
— Claude de Rouvroy, Duke de, father of the author, I. 1–4, 29, 34–51, 87, 341, 420, 434.—II. 349, 483.—III. 58, 59.—IV. 247, 422.—VI. 402
— Diane-Henriette de Budos, Duchess de, first wife of Claude, Duke de Saint-Simon, I. 1.—II. 483, 484, 487
Saint-Simon, Louis de Rouvroy, Duke de: VOL. I.: His interest in questions of precedence, etiquette, and privilege, v, vi; his occasional coarseness, vii; his literary style, viii, ix; his birth and parentage, 1; his education, begins writing his Memoirs, 2; is presented to the King, and joins the Musketeers, 3; mounts guard before the King at Compiègne, 4; at the siege of Namur, 5–8; his narrow escape from being shot by accident at Marienbourg, 10, 11; is appointed to the command of a troop in the Royal-Roussillon regiment, 29; on his father's death the King grants him his father's governments, 34, 35; he rejoins his regiment in Flanders, 52; his astonishment at the King's retreat, 54; his experiences in the battle of Landen, 54–61; he refuses the offered command of his regiment, 65; but obtains that of a regiment of Carbineers, 67; visits his relative the Bishop of Noyon, 66; he proposes marriage with one of the daughters of the Duke de Beauvilliers, but is not accepted, 75–77; he seeks consolation at La Trappe, 78; his action in the Luxembourg Peerage case, 87, 88, 91–94, 96; seeking a wife, 125–128; he marries the daughter of Marshal de Lorge, 128–131; with the army in Germany, 134, 135, 140, 141; with the Court at Marly, 151; again busy over the Duke of Luxembourg's Peerage case, 168–172; with the army again in Germany, 174, 175, 196; he returns to Paris, 196; and contradicts a calumny, 197; how he enabled Regnault to paint a portrait of the Abbot of La Trappe, 198–200; loses his old friend M. Bignon, 213; and the Chevalier, de la Hillière, 232; with the army again, 239; on his return from the army finds his wife had been invited to join the Princess's circle, 250, 251; his costly costumes for the Princess's marriage, 252; he tells M. de Beauvilliers of the intrigues against him, 279, 280; a disagreement between M. de la Trappe and the Bishop of Meaux places him in an awkward position, 285, 286; birth of his first son, 290; at the review and sham siege of Compiègne, 295–302; his friendship with M. de Pontchartrain, 304; and with the Bishop of Chartres and du Charmel, 305; he defends Abbé de la Trappe, 310; his action in defence of the heir to the dukedom of Brissac, 325–328; he speaks to the King of the affront to his wife by Madame d'Armagnac, 331–333; birth of his second son, 357; unpleasantness follows his suggestions on a matter of court etiquette, 387–391; he loses his friend the Abbé of La Trappe, 445; and Bontems the King's *Valet-de-chambre*, 467; his walk at Fontainebleau with Louville, 530
VOL. II.: He is received in Parliament as a Peer, 14–16; the effect upon his military career of the promotion of General Officers, 16, 17; he is advised to resign, 18; and does so, 19; the King's attitude towards him, 19–21; he writes a description of the commemorative medal of Louis XIII for a book on the medal of the reign of Louis XIV, 33; his friendship with the Duke of Orleans renewed, 45–47; his friendship sought by the Duke du Maine, 48–50; the start of his friendship with Chamillart, Minister of Finance, 89–93; the King's displeasure at his attitude in the matter of the collection at the New Year Mass, 157; he has an interview with the King, 158–160; and makes his peace, 161; he suffers from an abscess in his arm, 171; renews his friendship with the Princess des Ursins, 248, 256–258; his lawsuit with his brother-in-law, Brissac, 308; and after with the son, Cossé, 306–311; he warns the Duke de Beauvilliers against the Abbé Polignac, 315, 316; he is selected as Ambassador to Rome, 320–323; but is not sent, 324–327; the renewal of his acquaintanceship with the Duke of Orleans, 379–383; Chamillart shows him the correspondence between the King and Villeroy, 425, 426; he is party in a lawsuit, 483–490
VOL. III.: his conversations with the Bishop of Fréjus, 5–7; he suffers from a tertian fever, 12; he gives up dancing, 41; his interview with the Desmarets, the new Controller-General, 42, 43; he discovers that the Duke de Chevreuse is a Minister though he did not attend the Council, 48; he entertains Cardinal de Bouillon at La Ferté, 97–99; his visit to Pontchartain 101, 102; his bet about the relief of Lille, 146, 147; his scheme for the reform of the Government, 224–226; his discovery of a danger to the Duke de Beauvilliers, 225–229; and warns him, 229; the King's manner with him changes, 292; he has to give up his rooms at Court, 293; he advises M. de Beauvilliers, 303–305; his relations with the Duke of Orleans, 313; his advice to the Duke, 314; he is consulted by the Chancellor, 317–321; he sends his wife to try to discover from the Duchess of Bur-

Saint-Simon, Louis de Rouvroy, Duke de: (*Continued*)
gundy the cause of the coolness towards him, 322–325 ; his visit to La Flèche, 366, 367 ; he returns to La Ferté, 368 ; a visit to Pontchartrain, 369–371 ; he is persuaded on all hands not to leave the Court, 368-372 ; having to pass by Versailles he is surprised by the warmth of his reception, 371, 372 ; he asks Maréchal to procure him an audience of the King, 372, 373 ; his cordial reception by the Maréchale de Villars, 373 ; he meets the King in her rooms, 374 ; his design to save the Duke of Orleans, 375–377 ; Maréchal procures him an audience of the King, 378, 379 ; he persuades the Duke of Orleans to give up his mistress, 381–402 ; he carries the news to the Duchess de Villeroy, 410–412 ; the King fixes the time for his interview, 412, 413 ; the interview, 415–420 ; his interviews with the Duke of Orleans, 422, 423, 425, 426 ; his interview with the Duchess of Orleans, 428, 429, 435, 436 ; he calls to congratulate M. du Maine on the honours the King had done his children, 468–472 ; his satisfaction at resuming his position at Court, 484 ; his Essay on the Duke of Burgundy, 485–497 ; his scheme for the marriage of the Duke of Berry and Mademoiselle, 498–508, 512–516

VOL. IV. : He objects to the Duchesse de Saint-Simon becoming Lady of Honour to the Duchess of Berry, 1–3 ; he is congratulated on the marriage of the Duke of Berry with Mademoiselle, 25 ; Mademoiselle thanks him for his pains in the matter, 26 ; he is again pressed to allow Mme. de Saint-Simon to become Lady of Honour, 28, 29 ; they are compelled to give in, 33 ; the King calls him to his rooms to tell him of Mme. de Saint-Simon's appointment, 44 ; he sends word to his wife of the appointment, 45 ; he goes to see Monseigneur, 46 ; and Mme. de Maintenon, 47 ; he is accused of wishing to get rid of the Princess of Conti and Mme. la Duchesse, 86–90 ; his part in opposing D'Antin's claim to the Dukedom of Épernon, 103–112 ; his dislike to Meudon, 124, 125 ; his feelings at the news of Monseigneur's illness, 127 ; the King decides the matter of precedence between him and the Duke de Rochefoucauld, 185 ; his trouble with Pontchartrain about the Coast-guard, 217–224 ; he discusses changes in the Ministry with M. de Beauvilliers, 225–230, 233–237 ; he has an interview with the First Equerry, 238, 239 ; his association with the Duke of Burgundy, 239, 240 ; his opinions on Church Parties, 241–243 ; his growing intimacy with the Dauphin, 244–253 ; he and the Dauphin taken by surprise by the Dauphiness, 256–258 ; his anxiety to bring the Dauphin and Duke of Orleans together, 260 ; he tries to persuade the Duke of Orleans to leave the Duchess of Berry more with her husband, 262 ; which she resents, 262–264 ; his advice to the Duke of Orleans, 266–268 ; his memorial on the infringement of the privileges of the Peers, 269, 270 ; how he effects a reconciliation between the Chancellor and the Duke de Beauvilliers, 274–278 ; he applies for the office of Captain of the Guard, but the Duke of Charost is chosen, 281, 282 ; his relations with the Duke de Noailles, 298–303 ; he is sent for by the Duchess of Orleans, 366 ; his conversation with her and the Duke, 367, 369, 370 ; his sympathy with the Duke of Orleans, 371 ; he is warned against showing it, 371 ; public opinion of his behaviour towards the Duke of Orleans, 376–378 ; its effect on Mme. de Maintenon and M. du Maine, 378 ; he is warned by M. de Beauvilliers and goes away for a month, 378, 379 ; he refers his dispute with Marshal de Montrevel to the Duke du Maine, 420–422 ; it is decided in his favour, 423 ; Pontchartrain's ingratitude to him, 423–425 ; his threat to ruin Pontchartrain and the Chancellor's appeal for his son, 424–426 ; his dispute with the Duke de la Rochefoucauld as to precedence, 449, 450 ; his interview with Father Tellier touching the Constitution "Unigenitus," 463, 464 ; description of his apartments at Versailles, 465, 466 ; his further discussion with Father Tellier, 466–469 ; the King settles the precedence case between him and the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, 478–480 ; his mysterious meeting with Maisons, 519–521 ; he congratulates M. du Maine on his legitimisation, 522 ; also the Count de Toulouse and the Duchess of Orleans, 523

VOL. V. : He accepts office under M. de Beauvilliers in the education of the Dauphin, 16–18 ; his position at Court, 34–38 ; Father Tellier suggests him as King's Commissioner at a Council on the Constitution "Unigenitus," 45 ; his good advice to the Duke of Orleans recognised by the King, 50, 51 ; his anger against the Duke du Maine for his trickery, 74–76 ; he obtains leave of the Duke of Orleans for his physician to attend the Archbishop of Cambrai, 77 ; his visits to Mme. des Ursins, 101, 102 ; he receives a legacy in trust, 104–106 ; the Duchess of Orleans wishes him to make the acquaintance of the Marquis d'Effiat, 107–109 ; he is moved into new quarters at Marly, 114, 115 ; his attitude in the matter of the Constitution, 118 ; a chance meeting with Mme. des Ursins, 119 ; he is consulted by the Duchess of Orleans, 151–153 ; his dislike for the Marshal de Villeroy, 155 ; the Marshal's polite advances towards him, 155 ; 156 ; Father Tellier remains on a confidential footing with him, 161 ; and tries to learn his opinions of leading personages, 162 ; the Duke de Noailles' desire for his friendship, 165 ; his schemes for the Regency, 166–178 ; he declines the finances, 179 ; and suggests the Duke de Noailles, 179, 180 ; he accepts a seat on the Council of Regency, 180 ; his discussions with the Duke of Orleans of the various officials to be appointed during the Regency, 181–185 ; he advises the Duke of Orleans as to assembling the States-General, 186–189 ; and the immediate assumption of Regency, 190–192 ; his advice in financial and other matters, 194–199 ; the Duchess of Orleans' desire for information from him, 201 ; he spins out time in unmeaning verbiage, 201–203 ; Maisons' suggests to him that the King's will should be destroyed, 203–205 ; the Duchess of Orleans sounds him as to the fate of her brothers, 210–211 ; his opposition to the Duke de Noailles' suggestions, 221–223 ; the Duke de Noailles' jealousy of him, 225–228 ; his reconciliation with the Duke de Noailles on the occasion of his son's marriage, 230–236 ; he has an interview with the Duke of Orleans and learns how he has been duped, 249 ; on hearing

Saint-Simon, Douis de Rouvroy, Duke de: (*Continued*)
of the King's death he goes at once to persuade the Duke of Orleans to assemble the States-General, 232; thence to the Duke de la Trémouille, and returns to the Duke of Orleans and home to dinner, 333; sent for by the Duke of Orleans, 334; in the matter of the cap, he suggests, as it cannot be settled at once, one peer should make a formal protest, which is accepted, 335; he is selected to protest, 335, 336; he makes the protest, 337; with the Count de Toulouse he obtains the cancellation of the edict establishing Coast-guards, 360; his interest in the Marquis de Sandricourt, 363–366; he remonstrates with the Regent, 373; he procures Pontchartrain's resignation, 377, 378; his interview with the ex-Chancellor, 379, 380; after failing to get the Captaincy of the Guard for Rouey he obtains it for the Duke de Lorge, 382–384; his interviews with Law, 432–434; he persuades the Regent against the recall of the Huguenots, 437, 438; he procures Coigny's appointment to the Council of War, 445–447; he prophesies the acceptance of the Constitution, 455; he procures the Abbey of Andecy for a sister of Mme. de Saint-Simon, 456; he arranges to absent himself from the Council of Regency if unable to support the Regent, 464, 465; he persuades the Regent not to demolish Marly, 467, 468; he urges Cardinal de Noailles to appeal to a general council in the matter of the Constitution, 473; and argues the matter with the Regent, 474–482; he advises the Regent in the matter of the States-General, 492–503; he is appointed to the Committee of Finance, 503–505; he goes to d'Antin's house to see Peter the Great, 513, 514
VOL. VI.: He is congratulated on his impartiality on the Committee of Finance, 1; he dines with other members of the Committee at the Chancellor's, 2; his proposal to disband the Gendarmerie Light-Horse of the Guard and Musketeers, and two brigades being added to the Guards, 3, 4; he has a series of mysterious visits from Mme. d'Alègre, 18, 19, 186, 187; he advises the abolition of the salt tax, 25; his interview with Argenson, 33, 34; he hears of the Duke of Orleans' opinion of him, 42; he has a visit from Chirac about the botanical garden, 50; he obtains redress for the wrongs of the Canonesses of Donain, 56–58; he urges the Regent to resolute action with the Parliament, 71, 72; he proposes the holding of a *lit de justice*, 72, 73; and advises the Regent to leave M. du Maine as superintendent of the King's education for the time, 75; he arranges for the secret preparations for the *lit de justice*, 77–79, 107; his interview with the Duke de Bourbon, 80–91; he repeats the conversation to the Regent, 92–94; and warns him, 95; he misses the Duke de Bourbon, 96, 99; but meets him next evening, 101–104; he reports to the Regent, 104; another meeting with the Duke de Bourbon, 108–118; he interviews Millain, 119; he discusses the *lit de justice* and the reduction of the bastards with the Regent, 119–122; the Duke de Bourbon calls on him, at his request, 123; the Duke de la Force assists in drawing up the declaration in favour of the Count de Toulouse, 124, 125; his further interview with the Regent, 126–128; his final preparations, 129; his final interview with the Regent and the Duke de Bourbon, 130–133; he warns the Count de Toulouse to be prudent, 136; he arrives at the Tuileries, 136; and is conducted to the room of the Keeper of the Seals, 137; his joy at the downfall of the bastards, 165, 166; he is sent by the Regent to tell the news to the Duchess of Orleans, 171–176; and to Madame, 177; the Duchess of Orleans dictates to him her reply to the Regent, 178; why he did not take the opportunity to settle the affair of the cap, 184, 185; he obtains a post for the Chevalier de Rancé, 187; he persuades the Regent not to accept the resignation of the Duke de Mortemart, 188, 189; how he foils the Archbishop of Rouen, 191, 192; he is consulted by the Regent as to war with Spain, 205, 206; his advice disregarded and war declared, 207; he refuses shares in the Mississippi Company, 220; but is paid the 500,000 livres spent by his father in defending Blaye, 221, 222; his conversation with the Regent about the Council of Regency, 233, 234; the Regent offers him the Governorship to the King, 246; but he refuses it, 247; his repeated suggestions of a small advisory council, 251; and the Regent's offer to him, 252; he is consulted by M. le Noirmonstier, 253, 254; he persuades the Regent not to attend the Consecration of Dubois in Cambrai, but to no effect, 261; he puts a stop to a proposed marriage of the Duke de Lorge, 266; he is offered the post of Keeper of the Seals, 269; and refuses, 270, 271; he remonstrates with the Regent for wishing to discharge Marshal Villeroy and the Provost of the Merchants, 272; he again refuses Marshal de Villeroy's post, 273; Trudaine's gratitude to him, 274, 275; the Regent asks him to absent himself from the Council when the Constitution is to be registered, 281; his reconciliation with the First-President, 289; he is again offered the post of Governor to the King, 293; and his reasons for refusal 294–296; his objections to the treaty with England, 297, 298; the Regent's coldness to him, 299–302; he asks to be sent as Ambassador to Spain to demand the hand of the Infanta, 311; he is promised the appointment, 312; Dubois' overtures to him through Bellisle, 313, 314; his bickerings with Cardinal Dubois, 326; delays in his preparation for his mission, to Spain, 327; his suite, 328; he receives his instructions, 330–332; he starts on his mission, 335; his journey, 336–340; his arrival at Madrid, 341; his audience of the King and Queen of Spain, 342, 343; his magnificently entertained, 344; he shows copies of the letters he has to deliver to Grimaldo, but still none for the Infanta, 345; the impressions made on him by the King and Queen of Spain, 346, 347; his private audience of the King and Queen, 347, 348; his public audience of the King, 348–352; and of the Queen, 352–354; and the Prince of the Asturias, 354; he takes precedence of the Nuncio, 355, 356, 393–395; his admiration of the illuminations, 361; at a ball in the Hall, of the Grandees, 631–363; another private audience of the King and Queen of Spain, 363–365; he takes the news to the King and Queen that Mlle. de Montpensier is on

Saint-Simon, Louis de Rouvroy, Duke de : (*Continued*)
her way, 367–369 ; the many visits he has to pay, 371 ; his visit to the Escurial, 373–376 ; he is laid up for six weeks with smallpox, 376 ; his sketch of the characters of the King and Queen of Spain, 377–380 ; and of their daily life, 380–387 ; the unsatisfactory letters he receives from Cardinal Dubois, 387, 388 ; an audience of their majesties after his attack of smallpox, 389, 391 ; he pays his respects to Mlle. de Montpensier, 393 ; he and his younger son made Grandees of Spain, 395 ; at the court-ball, 397, 398 ; he takes leave of the King and Queen of Spain, 399 ; his visits to the Princess of the Asturias, 400–402 ; his second son invested as Grandee of Spain, 402 ; his failure to obtain the restoration of the Duke of Berwick to the favour of the King of Spain, 407, 408 ; he discusses the Princess of the Asturias with the King and Queen, 413, 414 ; he inspects the palace at Madrid, 417 ; and makes an expedition to Toledo, 417–420 ; and to Aranjuez, 421 ; he describes the ceremony of his son's reception as Knight of the Golden Fleece, 422–424 ; his journey to Balsaïm, 429, 430 ; his report to the King, 431 ; his visit to Segovia, 432, 433 ; the King shows him over La Granja, 434, 435 ; his farewells, 437–440 ; his journey home, 441–445 ; he resigns his dukedom in favour of his son, 447 ; he arranges a marriage for his daughter with the Prince de Chimay, 448, 449 ; his opposition to the appointment of Dubois as Prime Minister, 467–474 ; his friendship with the Regent strained, 481 ; resumption of his friendship with the Regent, 496 ; his visit of condolence to the Duchess of Orleans, 512 ; and to the Duke of Chartres, 519, 520 ; his impartiality, 527
— Louise de Crussol, Marquise de, I. 131
— Marie-Gabrielle de Durfort, Duchess de, wife of the author, I. 129, 174, 196, 250–252, 254, 286, 290, 291, 303, 304, 330–334, 357, 406, 530.—II. 20, 21, 45, 47, 48, 50, 58, 71, 83, 88, 90, 92, 119, 158, 159, 161, 164, 203, 207, 218, 223, 224, 246, 248, 257, 258, 264, 307, 309, 311, 321–325, 354, 424, 467, 490, 498, 499.—III. 13, 40, 43, 72, 80, 94, 95, 97, 99–102, 136, 204, 205, 254, 284, 286, 289, 293, 322–325, 368–373, 377–379, 413, 421, 427, 436, 449, 464, 471, 472, 483, 496.—IV. 2–6, 25–50, 32–34, 36–53, 72, 89–91, 125, 127–129, 131, 132, 135, 136, 144, 170–175, 183, 194, 195, 219, 221, 223, 258, 259, 262, 263, 272, 273, 294, 312, 324–325, 330, 332, 333, 351, 352, 354, 379, 403–405, 426, 428, 432, 433, 447, 463, 466, 469, 477, 479, 488, 489, 494, 498, 500, 501, 504, 505, 520.—V. 11, 33, 35, 37, 41, 43, 76, 101, 102, 106, 114, 116, 119, 130, 133–135, 142, 144, 148, 165, 197, 215, 224, 225, 230, 232–235, 357, 364–367, 375, 380–382, 386, 413, 445, 456.—VI. 51, 172, 213, 220, 223, 225–227, 239, 288, 289, 294, 439, 443, 448, 449, 495, 500, 510, 517, 521
— Marquis de, VI. 46, 328, 335, 340, 347, 369, 429
Saint-Vallery, M. A. de Bouillon de Montlouet, Mme. de, I. 26, 27
Sainte-Beuve, C. A., I. xvii, 113.—V. 454
Sainte-Maure, Honoré, I. 193.—II. 448.—IV. 156, 192, 216, 314.—V. 383
Saintrailles, J. de, I. 193
Sala, Benedict, Bishop of Barcelona and Cardinal, IV. 412
Salle, F. du C. de la, Bishop of Tournay, I. 345
Sanadon, Father, III. 199, 200, 506.—IV. 439
Sandricourt, Marquis de, V. 363–366
San-Estevan, F. Benavides, Count de, I. 446, 526
Santa-Cruz, Marquis de, VI. 370, 381, 386, 388, 389, 432, 439
Santeuil, J. B. de, Canon Regular of St. Victor, I. 243.—III. 453
Sapiena, J. Casini, Prince, I. 235, 237, 238
Sartine, VI. 329, 337, 340, 341, 348, 383, 387, 388, 429
Sassenage, J. R. Count de, I. 115.—III. 270
Saumery, Marquis de, I. 380, 381.—III. 271
— J. F. de la Carre, Marquis de, II. 41, 42, 223.—III. 271.—V. 315
— M. C. de M. de Besmaus, Marquise de, II. 223, 410
Saurion, I. 530
Savary, Bishop of Séez, I. 352
— I. 352
Savoy, Charles Emmanuel of, I. 41, 42.—II. 56.—III. 271
— Eugène, François, Prince of, I. 202, 268, 459, 507, 508, 514, 515.—II. 22–25, 40, 51–56, 141, 191, 192, 194, 201, 213, 272, 283, 284, 300, 356, 358, 370, 385, 386, 389–392, 394–396, 401, 402.—III. 2, 8, 109, 116, 117, 119, 141, 145, 159, 170, 174, 176, 183, 184, 187, 191, 335, 336, 340–342, 482.—IV. 55, 65, 68, 183, 283, 285, 368, 369, 386–388, 470, 506.—V. 454.—VI. 611
— Louise Gabrielle, Princess of, *see* Spain, L. G., Queen of
— Marie-Adelaide, Princess of, I. 176, 181, 183, 200–202, 207, 250–253, 257, 258. *See* Burgundy, Duchess of
— Victor Amadeus II, Duke of, afterwards King of Sicily, and later of Sardinia, I. 42, 66, 175, 176, 181, 201, 437–440, 459, 474, 479, 485, 503, 513–515.—II. 114, 132, 133, 136, 141, 142, 145, 190, 203, 209, 213, 241, 252, 300, 361, 384, 385, 395, 401, 415, 486.—III. 2–4, 7–12, 139, 207.—IV. 325, 350, 470, 471.—V. 84.—VI. 8, 36, 37, 61, 184, 231, 241, 268, 324
Saxe-Weimar, B., Duke of, I. 38
Saxe-Zeitz, C. A., Duke of, Bishop of Javarin, and Cardinal, I. 234, 271–273.—II. 275, 278, 327.—VI. 254
Saxony, Frederic Augustus, Elector of, I. 206, 234, 235, 237, 263, 272, afterwards King of Poland, *q.v.*—III. 1
Scarron, Mme., *see* Maintenon, Mme. de
— Paul, I. xii, 247, 348, 398.—V. 287, 288, 309
Schomberg, F. A., Marshal, I. 215.—V. 256
Schwartzenberg, Count de, I. 430
Scott, Sir Walter, I. ix
Scurre, I. 291
Séez, Bishop of, *see* d'Aquin, Savary
Séguier, Pierre, Chancellor, I. 24, 375
Segur, H. J., Marquis de, I. 499, 500
Seignelay, C. T. de Matignon-Torigny, M. de, 153, 154, 179
— J. B. Colbert, Marquis de, I. 154, 161, 162, 322, 367, 419, 441.—II. 97, 270.—III. 210.—V. 264, 296
Seissac, L. de G. de Castelnau, Marquis de, I. 274, 275.—II. 263
— J. T. P. C., Marquise de, I. 274
Senlis, Bishop of, *see* Chamillart
Sens, Archbishop of, *see* Hoguette Fortin de la
Séraphin, Father C. R. Herault, I. 167
Seri, Count de, V. 19
Séry, M. L. M., Mlle. de, afterwards Mme. d'Argenton, I. 488.—II. 380–382, 401.—III. 307, 312, 371, 375–377, 380–415, 422–424, 430, 461, 498, 508.—IV. 264, 364.—V. 135, 136, 148, 149, 201.—VI. 10, 11, 230

Sévigné, Marquis de, IV. 435
— M. du Rabutin-Chantal, Marquise de, I. 101, 124, 166, 222, 385.—II. 220, 274.—IV. 435.—V. 290, 409
Sforza, Duchess, II. 448.—III. 267.—V. 141, 142, 154, 386, 387, 406.—VI. 58, 174, 175, 177–180, 183, 449, 519
Shrewsbury, Charles Talbot, Duke of, IV. 393, 414, 429, 433
— Duchess of, IV. 415
Sicily, King of, *see* Savoy, Victor Amadeus II, Duke of
Sillery, C. P. Brulart, Chevalier de, I. 193.—II. 318
— F. B. de, Bishop of Soissons, I. 226, 227
— Mme. de, I. 227
Silly, J. J. Vipart, Marquis de, II. 195–199.—VI. 279
Simiane de Gordes, L. M. A. de, Bishop of Langres, I. 150, 501
Simon, Richard, M. II. 86
Sixtus IV, Francis della Rovere, Pope, I. 153
— V, Pope, III. 141
Sobieski, Alexander, Prince, I. 207, 233
— Constantine, Prince, I. 207, 233
— James, Prince, I. 206, 234.—VI. 190
— Maria Clementina, VI, 190
Soissons, Bishop of, *see* Sillery, F. B. de; Huet; Brulart
— Chevalier de, *see* Neufchâtel, Prince of
— Louis de Bourbon, Count de, I. 103, 117, 202.—II. 55, 56.—III. 271, 447, 482.—IV. 506
— Mlle. de, I. 202, 214, 268
— U. de la Clopte de Beauvais, Countess de, I. 33, 83, 245, 512.—II. 446.—III. 27, 170, 171, 264.—IV. 507.—V. 254.—VI. 11, 501,
Solars, Count de, I. 62
Solré, P. E. F. de Croy, Count de, II. 241
Sophia, Dorothea, of Zell, Consort of George I, I. 123
— The Electress, IV. 505
Soubise, A. G. M. de Rohan, Abbé de, afterwards Bishop of Strasbourg and Cardinal de Rohan, I. 409–416, 500, 501.—III. 168.—IV. 383, 413, 427, 456–460, 462, 465.—V. 43, 124, 171, 173, 240, 242–244, 246, 251, 319, 348, 352, 359, 422, 439–441, 478.—VI. 53, 92, 216, 311, 391, 425, 458, 463, 468, 475
— Anne de Rohan-Chabot, Princess de, I. 22, 207, 250, 291, 292, 378, 409.—II. 325, 467–469.—III. 31, 93, 118, 168, 201, 202, 204.—IV. 413, 426, 456–458.—V. 52, 285, 286, 290
— F. de Rohan, Duke de, I. 103, 104.—II. 109, 126.—III. 202, 446.—IV. 388, 389, 394.—VI. 403
Sourches, Mlle. Marie-Louise, de, I. 20
Sousternon, General, III. 176
Soye, de, III. 234
Spain, Queen of, Marie-Anne of Bavaria, second wife of Charles II, I. 245, 246, 337, 338, 416, 418, 446, 447, 458, 478, 451.—III. 312, 388.—V. 42.—VI. 338, 442
— — — Marie Louise d'Orleans, first wife of Charles II, I. 245.—II. 79, 177.—III. 170, 341
— Elizabeth de France, Queen-mother of, I. 168
— Infanta of, VI. 309–311, 323–325, 330, 332, 337, 338, 342, 347, 348, 354, 356, 358, 364, 371, 372, 422, 426, 427, 431, 446, 450
— Louise Gabrielle of Savoy, Queen of, first wife of Philip V, I. 522, 524–526, 529.—II. 39, 85, 133–136, 148, 175–178, 186, 219, 242, 243, 248, 255, 256, 267–269, 274, 279, 350, 373–375.—III. 103, 272, 299, 308–310.—IV. 49, 75, 79, 187, 213, 291–293, 326, 369, 476, 477, 482.—V. 102.—VI. 330, 380, 384 ,401
Spain, Princess of Parma, *q.v.*, second wife of Philip V., V. 87–92, 99, 100, 102, 392, 448.—VI. 8, 20, 59, 62, 199, 241, 242, 309, 332, 337, 338, 340–343, 346, 347, 352, 353, 356–369, 371, 374, 377–386, 389–400, 402, 405–414, 416, 421, 422, 424, 427–439, 443, 445, 476
Stair, Earl of, V. 103, 338, 388–393, 395, 417, 421, 422, 436, 437.—VI. 62, 105, 270, 403
Stanhope, James Stanhope, Earl, III. 308, 312.—IV. 75–77, 80.—V. 391.—VI. 20, 61, 62, 254
Staremberg, Guidobaldo, Count de, II. 385.—III. 105.—IV. 74–80, 112
Stirum, H. O., Count, II. 142
Strasbourg, Bishops of, *see* Furstemberg, and de Soubise
Sully, M. A. de Cambout, Duchess de, I. 250.—II. 2, 61.—III. 477
— Maximilian de Béthune, Duke de, II. 433.—V. 52
— M. H. de Béthune, Chevalier de, afterwards Duke, II. 2, 318.—IV. 403.—V. 222, 224, 334, 342, 374.—VI. 160–162, 167
— M. P. F. de Béthune, Duke de, I. 90, 105, 183.—III. 476.—IV. 403
Sunderland, R. Spencer, 2nd Earl of, II. 38.—III. 206
Surville, L. C. de Hautefort, Marquis de, II. 288, 289, 318, 409, 410.—III. 336

Tallard, C. de la Baume d'Hostum, Count de and Marshal, I. 141, 245, 455, 485, 499.—II. 95, 107, 108, 109, 128, 132, 142, 145, 147, 187, 188, 190–192, 194, 197, 199, 202, 226, 240, 242.—III. 53.—IV. 289, 337, 366, 426, 427, 459.—V. 36, 184, 348, 484, 520, 521.—VI. 38, 100, 109, 143, 148, 156, 158, 159, 464, 465
— Duke de, IV. 426, 427
Talmont, F. W. de la Trémouille, Prince of, I. 107.—VI. 482
Talon, Denis, President I. 269
Tambonneau, M. Boyer, Mme., I. 229
Tancrède, J. B., I. 489
Taviers, II. 364, 365
Tellier, Charles-Maurice, Archbishop of Reims, I. 14, 100, 104, 221, 224, 226, 258, 259, 425, 429.—II. 122–124, 389, 416, 423.—III. 136, 363, 450, 451.—IV. 348, 349
— Father, I. 426.—II. 120.—III. 195, 197–200, 244, 279, 296, 354, 361–365, 415, 432, 433, 479, 506, 507, 510, 513, 516, 518.—IV. 39, 40, 68–71, 83, 92, 119–123, 129, 134, 240, 271, 285, 303–306, 375, 419, 420, 434, 451–460, 462–469, 501, 511.—V. 43–45, 57, 82, 84–86, 117, 161, 162, 172, 211, 237, 239, 240, 242, 243, 246–248, 251, 315, 318, 320, 359, 397, 408, 439, 441.—VI. 211, 212, 371
— Michel, Chancellor, I. 21; 156, 232, 339, 379, 420.—II. 140, 421.—V. 255, 296, 306
Temple, Sir William, I. 338, 339
Tenain, Abbé, VI. 235–237
— Mme., VI. 235, 236
Termes, Roger, Marquis de, II. 168, 169
Terron, C. Colbert, Seigneur de, II. 270
Tessé, René, Count de and Marshal, I. 176, 182, 183, 254, 297–299, 459, 460, 479, 507, 508, 513.—II. 12, 13, 43, 95, 106, 109, 142, 145–147, 185, 186, 215, 216, 218, 219, 242, 248, 268, 300, 318, 346, 350, 354, 372, 374.—III. 7–11, 23, 64, 140, 242, 366, 384, 465.—IV. 366, 441, 481.—V. 36, 184, 301, 508–510, 512, 513, 515
— R. F. de Froullay, Chevalier de, II. 186
— Steward to the old Duke of Saint-Simon, I. 4
Tessut, L. de, Abbé, III. 47

Thaun, U. P. L., Count de, II. 384
Thésut, Abbé de, III. 422, 423.—V. 378–380
Thévenin, III. 56, 167
Thianges, G. de Rochechouart-Mortemart, Mme. de, I. 175.—II. 39, 189, 190, 447.—III. 33, 34, 210, 264, 267.—V. 284
— C. P. Damas, Marquis de, II. 39.—III. 33, 34
Thou, Abbé de, V. 104, 105
— Christopher de, I. 85
Thurgen, II. 283
Tibouville, VI. 217
Ticquet, I. 396
Tingry, C. F. F., Prince de, I. 54, 58, 89.—VI. 273
— M. L. C. G. d'Albert de Luxembourg, Princess de, I. 82
Tonnere, F. de Clermont, Count de, I. 292.—II. 298.—III. 19
— G. N. de la Rochefoucauld de Roye du Blanzae Mme. de, I. 186.—III. 19
Torcy, C. F. A. de Pomponne, Mme. de, I. 251.—III. 15–18, 196.—IV. 227.—VI. 313
— J. B. Colbert, Marquis de, I. 179, 238, 241, 245, 260, 265, 296, 318, 322, 341, 359, 380, 397, 424, 437, 448, 449–452, 455.—II. 6–8, 10, 11, 67, 68, 83, 136, 173, 207, 208, 227, 228, 247, 268, 269, 310, 321, 322, 324, 327, 352, 354, 482.—III. 3, 17, 44, 55, 127, 140, 232–234, 240, 268, 269, 279, 285, 296, 298, 311, 441, 446.—IV. 184, 188, 196, 198, 213, 226–229, 289, 452, 471, 486, 504.—V. 2, 36, 39, 84, 91, 93, 103, 110, 157, 161, 176, 184, 199, 304, 305, 348, 355, 389, 393.—VI. 39, 54, 143, 144, 180, 195, 199, 240, 303, 305–307, 313, 333, 334, 403
Torréts, C. de Moscoso, Count, Las, II. 318
Touanne, La, I. 530
Toul, Bishop of, *see* Bissy
Toulouse, Archbishop of, *see* Fleury
— Louis-Alexandre de Bourbon, Count de, natural son of Louis XIV, I. 12, 65, 77, 123, 124, 132, 191–193, 239, 266, 289, 405, 441, 444, 482.—II. 2, 14, 34, 40, 43, 44, 98, 110, 146, 182, 203–205, 219, 229–231, 258, 290, 346, 359, 360, 371, 438, 471, 500–502.—III. 52, 231, 297, 319, 326, 452, 459, 467–469.—IV. 98, 157, 181, 232, 273, 289, 290, 313, 369, 376, 393, 397, 410, 438, 439, 523, 524, 527–530.—V. 8, 94, 140, 170, 185, 190, 241, 245, 327, 341, 342, 350, 355, 360–362, 377, 386, 387, 406, 411, 424, 425, 445, 485, 487, 491, 513, 517–519.—VI. 15, 16, 21, 58, 82, 85, 86, 89, 90, 102, 104, 105, 116, 117, 119, 121, 124, 125, 128, 136, 139–142, 144, 147–151, 161, 165–167, 176, 177, 180–182, 191, 202, 479, 483, 484, 525
Tour, P. F. d'Arères, Father de la, I. 411.—II. 249, 250, 337, 418, 494, 495, 506.—III. 100, 102, 219, 220, 250–252, 449.—IV. 237
Tourbes, Mlle. de, IV. 226, 502, 503.—V. 51
Tournai, Bishop of, *see* Salle, F. du C. de la, and Beauvau
Tournemine, Father, V. 172
Tournon, Cardinal de, IV. 92, 279
Tours, Mlle. de, III. 252
Tourville, Anne Hilarion de Contentin, Count de, I. 8, 9, 29, 30, 64, 485
— C. de Constantin, Baron, I. 40
Trémouille, J. E., Abbé de la, afterwards Cardinal, II. 275–278, 319, 324, 325, 327.—III. 168.—IV. 66, 455, 456, 461, 462, 479.—VI. 45, 54, 252–254, 258
— C. B. H., Duke de la, I. 54, 87, 88, 90–92, 94, 97, 154, 170, 296, 326.—II. 236.—III. 90, 176, 221, 271.—IV. 164, 501.—V. 333, 334
— Duchess de la, I. 47
Trémouille, M. A. V., Mlle. de, I. 105, 125
Tresmes, B. F. Portier, Duke de, II. 250, 251, 333, 408.—III. 62, 334, 384, 441, 517.—IV. 58, 59, 105–107, 110, 179, 180, 382, 493.—V. 70, 159, 374, 375, 514
Trévoux, Father (Pierre du), I. 487, 491.—III. 506, 518.—IV. 17, 501
Troisvilles, H. J. de Payer, Count of, II. 183, 184, 333.—III. 161
Troyes, Bishop of, *see* Chavigny
Trudaine, Provost of the Merchants, VI. 63, 272–275
Turenne, A. G. de Levis, Princess de, I. 33
— Henri de la Tour, Vicomte de, I. 22, 34, 104, 126, 207, 261, 292, 340.—II. 55, 71–73, 76, 77, 109, 222, 345, 356.—III. 270, 291, 349.—IV. 507.—V. 96, 261
Tuscany, M. L. d'Orleans, Grand-Duchess of, II. 469, 470.—III. 330.—IV. 72.—VI. 252, 317, 318, 320
— Cosmo III de Medici, Grand-Duke of, I. 286, 287.—II. 359.—V. 54.—VI. 317, 318, 402

Ubilla, A. B., Marquis de Rivas, I. 448.—II. 134
Urfé, Marquise d', III. 204, 414
— J. M. de Lascaris, Marquis d', I. 193
Ursins, Princess des, *see* Bracciano, Anne-Marie, Duchess of
Usson, J. de Bonnac, Marquis d', II. 141
Uzès, F. de Crussol, Count d', I. 430
— Henri de Bourbon, Duke de, I. 24, 61.—V. 62
— F. de Crussol, Count d', I. 430.—II. 16
— J. S. de Saint-Maure, Duchess d', I. 131, 250, 427.—IV. 178
— Louis, Marquis de Crussal, afterwards Duke d', I. 80, 97, 155, 355, 427.—II. 348.—IV. 407, 413.—V. 367, 368

Valbelle, L. A. de, Bishop of St. Omer, I. 345
Vaillac, Francois, Comte de, II. 513, 514
Valdecañas, Marquis de, IV. 78
Valderies, Bishop of Luçon, IV. 120–123, 285, 286
Valentinois, A. Grimaldi, Duke de, I. 155, 216, 217
— M. de Lorraine-Armagnac, Duchess de, I. 216, 217,
Valincourt, I. 204.—VI. 136, 180, 182
Vallière, Louise-Françoise de, Mlle. la, mistress of the King, I. 12, 30, 242, 294.—II. 492.—IV. 59, 60.—V. 271, 283, 285
— C. C. de Baume le Blanca, Marquis de La, II. 203, 492.—III. 36, 193.—IV. 145, 164.—VI. 482, 483
— M. T. de Noailles, Marquise de la, II. 415, 492.—IV. 37, 46, 188, 192
Valois, Mlle. de, younger daughter of the Duke of Orleans, IV. 443.—VI. 88, 103, 230–232, 254, 255
— Louis le, Jesuit Father, I. 224, 226, 431
Valouse, First Equerry to Philip V of Spain, VI. 348, 386, 423, 430
Valsemé, L. M. de Granville, Marquis de, II. 193
Vanbauze, II. 377
Varangeville, C. A. Courtin, Mme. de, I. 203
Varenne, G. Foucquet, Marquis de la, I. 254.—V. 516
— G. Foucquet, de la, valet to Henry IV, I. 254, 409, 410
Vaset, II. 377
Vassor, Michel le, I. 434–436
Vatteville, Jean, Abbé, II. 3–5

Vauban, S. Le Pretre de, Marshal, I. 5. 427.—II. 74, 95, 101, 102, 238, 299, 300, 360, 361, 371, 385, 431–435.—IV. 81.—V. 321 —VI. 25
Vaubourg, IV. 81
Vaubrun, N. G. de Bantru, Abbé de, I. 423
Vaudemont, Anne Elisabeth, Princess de, I. 256.—II. 209, 210, 355, 476, 477.—V. 2
— C. H. de Lorraine, Prince of, I. 53, 55, 58, 135–137, 172, 255–257, 459, 479, 506–508, 513, 514.—II. 8, 22, 40, 52, 130, 132, 145, 146, 205, 209, 210, 355, 390, 401, 461–464, 473–482.—III. 33, 68, 117, 129, 140, 143, 146, 151, 155, 296, 328, 441.—IV. 187, 188, 359, 366, 472.—V. 157, 159, 258, 301
— Thomas de Lorraine, Prince of, II. 23, 24, 51, 52
Vaugué, Mme. de, IV. 411
Vauguyon, A. de, Count de la, I. 70–74
—, M. de Saint-Mégrin, Countess de, I. 71
Vauxbourg, IV. 491
Vendôme, Charles de Bourbon, Duke of, I. 12
— Louis Joseph, Duke of, I. 66, 74, 90, 97, 98, 109, 116, 117, 121, 122, 132–134, 138, 139, 149, 150, 167, 234, 239, 245, 254, 266, 289, 290, 351, 352, 370, 371, 427, 467.—II. 14, 28, 34, 51, 129, 133, 145, 146, 182, 185, 213, 241, 263, 266, 272, 282–285, 300, 339–345, 358, 359, 370, 371, 385–389, 411, 412, 424, 450, 469, 470, 473, 505.—III. 1, 2, 32, 50, 51, 66–74, 108–125, 127–133, 139–155, 157–160, 173–175, 177, 182, 184–187, 192, 216, 226, 231, 232, 247, 258–263, 274, 279, 282, 295, 296, 298, 323, 368, 374, 418, 443, 465, 473, 474.—IV. 73, 74, 77–79, 112, 154, 185, 187, 188, 190, 193, 211, 213, 291, 383–385, 397, 506.—V. 98, 102, 315.—VI. 51, 230, 375
— L. V., Duchess of, II. 446.—IV. 74, 115, 349, 361.—VI. 51
— Philippe de, Grand Prior, I, 66, 122, 123, 266, 289, 290, 351.—II. 29, 112, 185, 242, 283–285, 344, 345.—III. 123, 279, 474.—IV. 92, 506.—V. 95, 96, 125, 126, 130, 426, 427, 483.—VI. 51, 209, 229, 230
Veni, Mme. de, VI. 49
Ventadour, C. E. M. de la Motte-Haudemont, Duchess de, I. 33, 276, 277, 504, 516–518.—II. 117, 169, 170, 380, 382.—III. 157, 377, 407, 413, 414, 422, 424.—IV. 35, 48, 350, 352, 427, 432.—V. 94, 102, 159, 245, 330, 344, 346, 350, 402, 438–440, 468.—VI. 311, 463
— L. C. de Levis, Duke de, I. 90, 97, 100
Veragua, Duke de, VI. 329, 330
Verbaum, II. 377
Verneuil, Charlotte, Duchess de, I. 24.—IV. 448
— Henri de Bourbon, Duke de, *see* Uzès, Duke de
Verrillon, III. 251
Vertamont, M. F. de, II. 306
Verteuil, Abbé de, IV. 25
Veruue, Abbé de, I. 438.—II. 486
— Count de, I. 437.—II. 203, 486
— J. B. d'Albert de Luynes, Countess de, I. 437–440.—II. 486.—IV. 350, 351, 471
Vervins, L. J. de Cominges, Marquis de, II. 212
Vibraye, H. E. Hurault, Marquis de, II. 397.—III. 51
Victoire, Abbé de la, V. 54
Vidame, origin of the title, I. 290
Vieuvillle, Mme. de la, III. 92.—IV. 43, 48, 49, 495
Vleuxpont, V. 489
Vignacourt, Mme., Canoness of Denain, VI. 56–58
Villacerf, E. Colbert, Marquis de, I. 182, 335, 375.—III. 76
Villadarius, II. 52, 204.—IV. 73
Villafranca, F. de Toledo Osorio, Marquis of, I. 446
Villagarcias, Marquis of, I. 446.—VI. 363
Villanez, Marquis de, II. 274
Villarceaux, Louis de Mornay, Marquis de, I. 27.—V. 288, 291
Villaroel, Marquis de, III. 315
Villars, Duke de and Marshal, I. 350, 512.—II. 5, 55, 63–69, 95, 111, 112, 128, 129, 141–144, 147, 170, 171, 184, 203, 213, 239–241, 266, 279, 280, 282, 302, 360, 379, 384, 388, 419, 424.—III. 24, 64, 72, 231, 272, 275, 282, 290, 291, 335–338, 341–346, 348–350, 373–375, 437–440, 508.—IV. 54–56, 58, 61–64, 108, 213, 281, 283, 284, 386–388, 411, 470, 517.—V. 42, 160, 170, 192, 348, 355, 408, 427, 467, 468.—VI. 27, 38, 48, 51, 57, 100, 109, 110, 117, 131, 136, 143, 146, 148–150, 152, 153, 155, 158, 159, 280, 322
— J. A. R. de Varengeville, Maréchal de, II. 5.—III. 284, 285, 373, 374, 452.—IV. 516, 517
— Pierre, Marquis de, I. 20, 21, 270, 322, 347.—V. 288
Ville-aux-clercs, Le, VI. 65
Villefort, IV. 113
— Jeanette, Mme. de, IV. 113, 114
— Mme. de, IV. 113
Villena, F. d'Acuña Pacheco, Marquis de, I 446.—VI. 395–397
Villeroy, C. de Neufville, de Archbishop of Lyons, I. 68, 401.—II. 56
— F. C. de Neufville, Chevalier de, I. 401
— F. de Neufville, Duke de and Marshal, I. 29, 30, 33, 53–58, 62, 65, 104, 122, 132, 136, 137, 139, 150, 154, 169, 189, 214, 240, 265, 332, 337, 370, 392, 401, 402, 480, 504, 506–509, 513–515.—II. 8, 26, 28, 56, 63, 83, 84, 93, 95, 106, 108, 117, 145, 146, 185, 187, 191, 194, 195, 197, 199, 201, 202, 240, 266, 272, 279–282, 289, 362, 318, 330, 331, 344, 363, 364, 366–371, 387, 414, 424–427, 465, 505, 508, 510.—III. 19, 27, 32, 132, 136, 137, 163–165, 171, 222, 227, 267, 295, 296, 414, 434.—IV. 96, 157, 355, 356, 365, 368, 405, 406, 441, 450.—V. 24, 36, 41, 42, 84, 155–159, 161, 162, 170, 183–185, 238, 239, 241, 242, 244, 246–250, 300, 301, 314–316, 330, 341, 344, 346, 348, 350, 355, 358, 359, 375, 400, 413, 417, 422, 424, 427, 429, 431, 434, 438, 453, 463, 468, 471, 505, 509, 511, 512, 522.—VI. 2, 9, 10, 21, 27, 38, 49, 54, 57, 69, 72, 74, 86, 93, 100, 105, 109, 110, 113, 117, 124, 130, 137, 139, 140, 143, 146, 148–153, 155, 156, 159, 160, 162, 168, 188, 216, 243–247, 250, 251, 272–276, 280, 284, 285, 293–296, 304–307, 311, 316, 317, 319, 321–324, 345, 426, 427, 447, 450–466, 474, 494
— L. N. de Neufville, Duke de, II. 26, 52, 93, 112, 215, 414, 418, 426.—III. 32, 33, 85, 123, 163, 222, 227, 231, 268, 295, 306, 324, 383, 385, 411, 469, 479.—IV. 103, 104, 106, 108–110, 183, 185, 192.—V. 63, 65, 155, 159, 227, 228, 374, 509.—VI. 280, 340, 464, 465
— M. de Cossé Brissac, Maréchal de, I. 154, 191, 251, 322, 325, 327, 328, 402–404.—II. 26, 28, 81, 92, 163, 253, 508.—III. 163–166, 482.—V. 23, 24, 142, 155
— M. le Tellier Louvois, Duchess de, II. 26, 45, 47, 92, 215, 250, 296, 298, 427.—III. 33, 85, 136, 137, 227, 295, 297, 306, 374, 383, 385, 410–412, 427, 434, 461, 469, 503, 510, 513.—IV. 40, 137, 138, 182, 183, 185, 258.—V. 139, 155

Villeroy, N. de Neufville, Duke de, and Marshal, I. 75.—III. 163
Villers, G. C. d'O, Marquis de, I. 191–193, 380.—II. 40, 44, 204, 230.—III. 71, 130, 142, 144, 148, 149, 182, 325, 326, 459, 468, 469, 504, 513.—IV. 142, 216, 232, 329.—V. 9, 323, 485.—VI. 483
— M. A. ffe la Vigne de Guillarageus d'O' Marquise de, I. 191–193.—II. 215, 314.—III. 145, 181, 325, 326, 412, 469, 503, 504, 513.—IV. 312.—V. 215, 485
Villette, La, V. 412, 413.—VI. 6
Villiers, de Mortier, E. B. de, I. 175
Viviers, Bishop of, *see* Ratabon
Vivonne, L. V. de Rochechouart, Duke de, III. 61, 209, 210.—IV. 307.—VI. 283
— Duchess de, III. 209, 210.—IV. 307
Voisin, a woman fortune-teller, accused as poisoner, I. 83.—III. 170
Voltaire, V. 434
Voysin, D. F., de, Chancellor after Pontchartrain, I. 361, 364.—II. 444.—III. 42, 84, 286, 288–291, 295, 297, 300, 316, 349, 414, 437, 438, 443.—IV. 54, 94, 188, 195, 213, 219, 229, 350, 355, 452, 512, 513, 522.—V. 7, 8, 16, 36, 161, 183, 184, 203, 205, 207, 238, 239, 241, 243, 244, 246, 248–250, 348, 355, 407, 436, 453, 457, 459.—VI. 7, 47, 48, 272
— Mme. de, III. 287, 288, 295, 511.—IV. 114, 490, 491
Vrillière, L. Phélypeaux, Marquis de, La, I. 269, 422, 423, 430, 431.—II. 99, 310, 311, 434.—III. 80, 81, 97, 103, 242, 292.—IV. 103, 104, 195, 213, 229, 233, 393, 420, 422, 510.—V. 161, 185, 355, 363, 378–380, 411, 412.—VI. 13, 34, 40, 44, 73, 74, 76, 126, 128–130, 137, 138, 143, 146, 147, 154, 156, 158, 159, 279, 451
Vrillière, F. Mailly, Mme. de la, I. 423, 430, 431.—II. 214–218.—IV. 195.—V. 197

Walpole, Sir Horace, III. 5, 6.—VI. 255
— Sir Robert, III. 4–6
Wartigny, Maréchal-de-camp, II. 233
Wassenaër, E., Mlle. de, I. 342
Weimar, B., Duke of, *see* Saxe-Weimar
William III, Prince of Orange and afterwards King of England, I. xi, xii, 48, 53, 55, 58, 62, 65, 123, 135, 139, 140, 173, 215, 240–242, 256, 257, 264, 265, 320, 416–418, 434, 436, 468, 476, 513, 528, 529, 533.—II. 37, 38, 43, 75, 206, 208.—IV. 101, 279.—V. 178, 256–259
Wills, General, IV. 77
Wolfenbüttel, E. C. de Brunswick, Princess of, II. 409

York, Duke of, *see* James II, King of England
Ypres, Bishop of, *see* Jansenius Ratabon; Laval

Zinzendorf, Count, I. 437, 453, 513
Zamet, Sebastian, IV. 111
Zuniga, Don Gaspard de, IV. 79
Zurblauen, B. G de, II. 194

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